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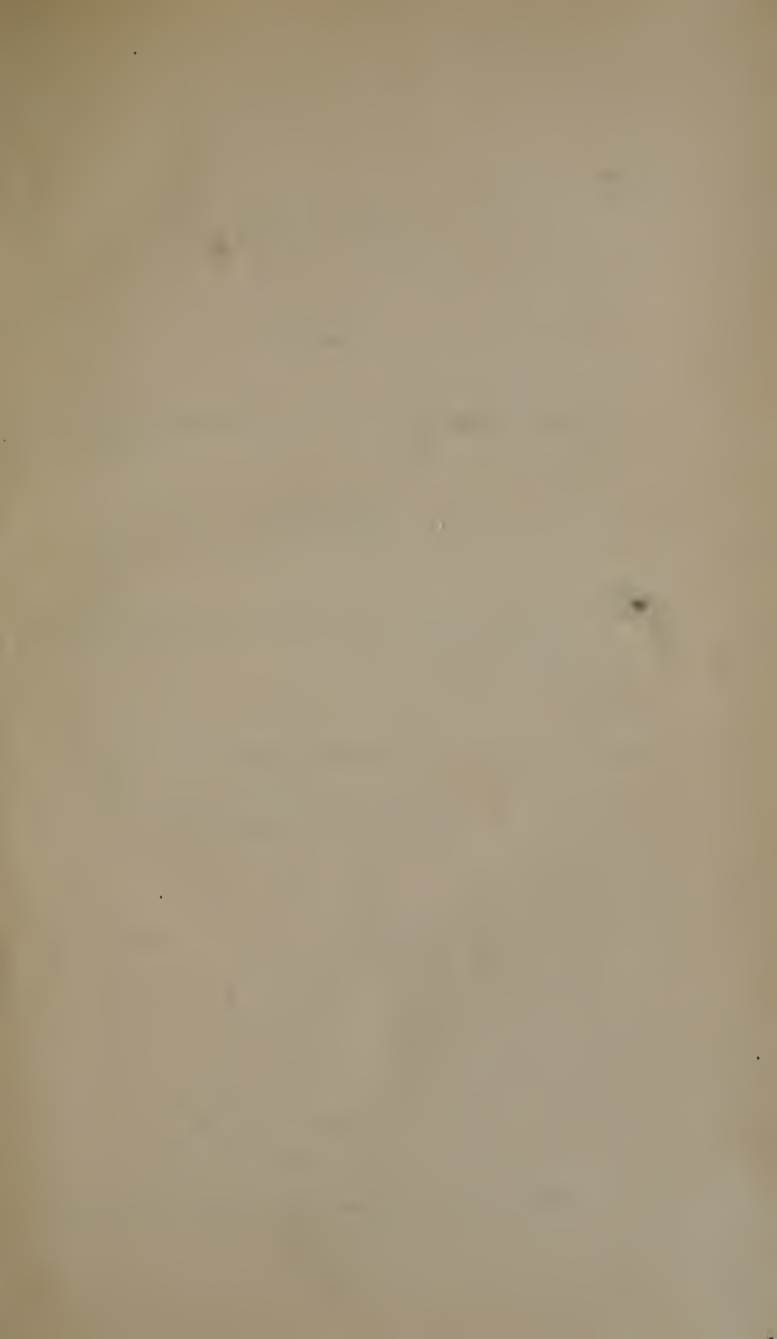
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CECIL:

OR, THE

ADVENTURES OF A COXCOMB.

A NOVEL.

He was such a delight,—such a coxcomb,—such a jewel of a man!

BYRON'S JOURNAL.

Second Edition.

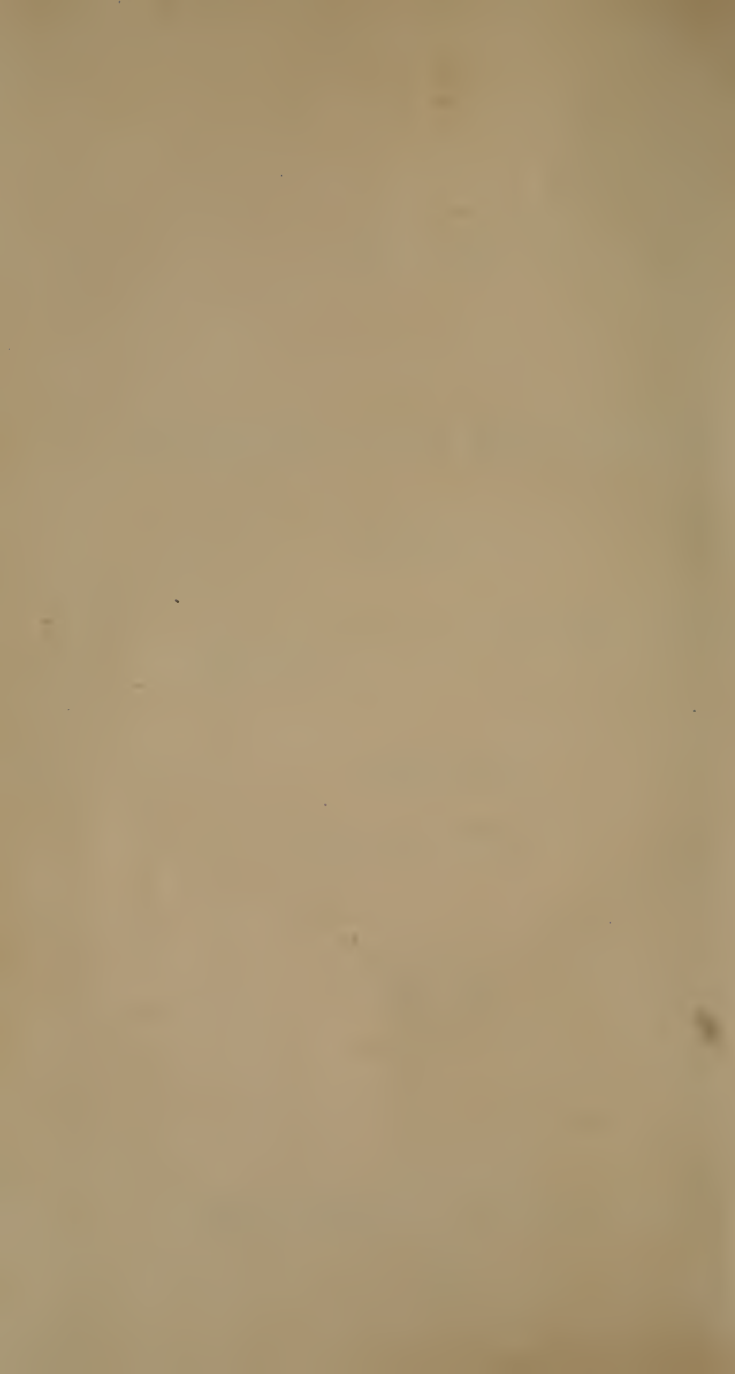
IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1843.



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CECIL;

OR, THE

ADVENTURES OF A COXCOMB.

CHAPTER I.

Se amor non è, che dunque sento?

PETRARCA.

How the first little rubs of life linger in one's memory!—I have had my share of grievances. I have drunk my fill of vinegar and hyssop. Yet I can recall to mind, even now, the irritation of smarting under the impertinence of Lady Harriet Vandeleur, the contempts of Morley, the vulgar quizzing of Jack Harris, and, above all, the coolness of my brother.

There are moments when petty slights are harder to bear than even a serious injury. Men have died of the festering of a gnat-bite. Yet, strange to tell, the only person on whom I visited my vexation of spirit, was one who had never offered me offence ; —Emily was the victim. Not even her pale anxious face, watching for me throughout the opera and ballet, exercised an extenuating influence. She looked sad as a white rose over a sepulchre ; yet I remained cruel,—cruel as a grand inquisitor or a jealous woman.

I never went near her. — Poor Emily ! — Though I had almost given up my projects relative to Lady Harriet, I could not make up my mind to condescend again so readily. Besides, *she* was always attainable ; I might take *her* up again at any time. That was the secret of my coolness. We grow indifferent to blessings whose continuance is assured — the light of the sun—the bursting of the spring—all the fairest phenomena of nature. I should

have taken the trouble, perhaps, to ascend to the old box, had I surmised that I was fated never to see her there again! For after that night, it remained empty. It was some comfort not to see it polluted by strange faces, particularly such faces as one usually espies at that ignominious altitude. But it had been let for the season to the d'Acunhas, who neither returned nor underlet it.

After the first night of missing them from the spot, how I used to sit and watch that box!—No astronomer waiting the rising of his newly-discovered planet could be more intensely anxious. My “upturned and wondering eyes” must have given me a strangely ridiculous appearance; but, for once, I was not thinking of appearances.

I bore it for a week—a fortnight; still, not a vestige of her. The season was drawing to a close. I had taken no heed of its waning pleasures since I became anxious about Emily. I was haunted by the pale pensive face, of

which I had merely said at the time, "Emily is not in beauty to-night,—I will go and visit her another time."

The last representation of the season took place. Everybody who frequents the Opera, and happens to be in town, is sure to be there on the last night; and I made sure of seeing her. I provided myself with one of her favourite magnolias. I felt my cheek burn with eagerness as I took my station in the pit, with my eyes uplifted as usual. I dare say Morley was in Lady Harriet's box. I never looked. I was thinking only of Emily.

But the box was again vacant!—That night it looked to me like a tomb. I knew that my last chance of meeting her was at an end. For six gloomy months, no opera. For six gloomy months, that box, so long a paradise, must remain a little, dusty, damp, ill-savoured closet, given over to mice and spiders. I hurried up to sit there once more. The box-keeper readily admitted me, and I took Emily's

place behind the curtain. I even laid down the magnolia before it on the crimson cushion, as if she were there. The scent of vanille lingered there still, as though its former inmates had only just quitted the place ; and so powerfully were they brought before me by the association, that I kept expecting every minute to hear their voices by my side.

I could stand this suspense no longer. Next day, after office, I went straight to Southampton Buildings. Nay, I inquired explicitly and without hesitation for Miss Barnet. I was desperate.

My inquiry struck no amazement into Pepper-and-Salt. He seemed almost prepared for it ; almost to expect that one of Mr. Hanmer's clients should knock at the door, and ask to see his ward ; and there was a twinkle of satisfaction in the creature's eye, as he announced that " Miss Emmily warn't there no longer."

" Was she gone to Monsieur d'Acunha's !"—

“ May be she was—may be she warn’t—he couldn’t say. Should he inquire of the head clerk ?—”

It was, of course, more agreeable to me to inquire of d’Acunha himself; so away I went to Burton Crescent.—A bill up!—THIS HOUSE TO BE LET!—Deeply mortified, I turned my horse’s head once more towards the West-end. But on reaching Portland Road, I had the weakness to turn, and to return. Perhaps the person charged to show the house, might afford information. I alighted, and requested to look at it; and the dry, withered, wooden thing in a green-baize apron,—man, woman, child,—for it seemed to partake of all three,—immediately began to enlarge upon the size of the “parlours” and the extreme convenience of sinks and fountains, sufficiently innocent of this world’s sophistications, to believe that a person of *my* manners and appearance entertained serious intentions towards a house in Burton Crescent, at a period of the year when

filberts and jargonelle pears were coming into season !

I inquired after the last lodgers: it knew nothing about them. It was "put in by the house-agent." It "s'posed the last ludgers was furriners; for the house smelt of baccy enough to p'ison one." It even wanted to tell me how much soap and how many scrubbing-brushes had been required to obliterate the d'Acunhas.

I went home thoroughly wretched. While my illusions lasted, I had scarcely noted the progress of the season. They were gone, and I discovered that I was alone. All was over. There was not only no Emily, but no London. At Watier's that night, scarcely a soul!—It had never occurred to me before, that a Government clerk was a denizen of Downing Street; that the rest of the world shot grouse,—toured to the lakes,—or betook itself to the silvery sands of the Isle of Wight,—while a clerkly pen must perforce remain in the ink,

and a clerkly hand on the pounce-box. I began to think (as I sulked in the corner of the sofa at Watier's, sole monarch of all I surveyed,) like a grumbling minister, who has been snubbed by his sovereign, or by his sovereign's sovereign, the House of Commons, — about sending in my resignation.

The recollection of Lord Ormington's stiff conditions touching the ways and means, luckily suspended my resolution. I had not forgotten Lady Harriet's advice to me, not to trifle with Lord Ormington. Moreover, he was out of town. I had never missed him. I ought to have inferred that he was gone; for parliament was up, and our officials comparatively out of harness. Nothing remained but the clerks and the desks: the rest of the wooden furniture had migrated. But though the rumble of Lord Ormington's carriage every evening had ceased, and the grumble of Lord Votefilch's discontent every morning, I had been unconscious of my loss.

Such among my readers as may have been compelled to outlast the season in London, from being in office, in love, or in debt, must recollect the strangeness of suddenly discovering, like Aladdin, that the magic palace has disappeared. For the last month, we notice hosts of travelling-carriages departing, with a sensation of relief. The dull and elderly go first. All June and July, one sees family-coaches setting forth with post-horses as one is coming home from balls; and *then*, there is triumph in remaining: for it is the select few who are left, to eat the *diners d'élite*, and do all sorts of pleasant things never attempted so long as the mob remains undecimated. It is a distinction to be one of the court-cards kept in hand. Carlton House was never so brilliant as during the dog-days. The last fortnight of the season resembles one of those fine summer's nights when only stars of the first magnitude are visible; when favourite constellations stand out in relief, all the myriads

of little stars having hidden their diminished heads !

But this distinction imparts only a deeper shade to the succeeding darkness. On the day which rouses us to the consciousness of being alone in hot, dusty London, when the oblique rays of the autumnal sun betray the coating of soot and dust encrusting the houses,—when the sparrows, grown tame, hop chirping impertinently along the streets,—when the city looks and smells like a city of apple-stalls,—when shopmen stand with pens behind their ears on the door-steps instead of behind their counters,—when the suburban theatres and gardens placard the walls and palings, (and all London in a state of repair, furnishes palings in abundance,) with every variety of coloured paper announcing every sameness of colourless entertainment ; then it is, that we suddenly inquire where all the people are gone ;—and Echo answers “ Where ?—”

What a relief when the hollow nymph favoured *me* for the first time with this contemptuous reply, to reflect upon Lady Ormington's false appetite for the Metropolis! — It was an unspeakable comfort to think that our house was not going to be paled in or shuttered up like the rest. On the day I returned home from my expedition to the house agent's who had the letting of the "family mansion" in Burton Crescent, with information that the d'Acunhas had sailed by the Oporto packet, on the first of the month, for Portugal, and that, to the best of his belief, they were accompanied by a young English lady, name unknown, I could scarcely have borne to find myself alone in an uninhabited house. Even Bibiche was better company than my thoughts.

For my reflections were anything but rose-coloured. I was fain to confess that, with all my tact and cleverness, my season had been a failure. I had achieved nothing. My advantages had

been great, the result—*fiasco* !—My squinting brother was at the top of the tree. The last object that had struck me, on the last night of the opera, was Jack Harris installed in the Vandeleurs' box ; not on sufferance, but smiled upon and encouraged by Lady Harriet and the Marchioness of Devereux,—evidently on the way to obtain waistcoat the third. Chippenham was the established pet of Maybush Lodge, and Danby was gone down to Lady Warburton's family seat, as the accepted lover of Lady Susan Thedon. Everybody had paired off, saving myself.

When these humiliating conclusions occurred to me, I presumed to accuse Emily as the origin of my failure ! Second thoughts whispered "Curse not Southampton Buildings, even in thy chamber." A painful presentiment already connected itself in my mind with the sweet face I had seen looking so sorrowfully down upon me from the opera-box.

The impression did not diminish as the au-

tumn drew on. “*Les jours se suivent,*” says the proverb, “*et ne se ressemblent pas.*” The torment of London, out of the season, is that one day telleth another, and one night certifieth another : eternal sameness,—the sameness of a sea voyage. Even the business of my official morning was thrice as tedious as during the session of parliament. The gods were departed ; — the master-spirits gone who imparted some relief to my labours. There was no one left beside myself but Herries—plodding Herries,—one very silent old senior clerk, who was pretty much on a par, in point of intellect, with Babbage’s Calculating Machine,—and two or three juniors, whose chief recreation, like my own and other natives, consisted in gaping. The Parks were enveloped in mist. The Town lay rotting like the fat weed on Lethe’s wharf. It was like a city of the plague, nay, worse. In the terrible descriptions of Defoe and Boccaccio, there is something to excite the two strongest of our sympathies, pity and terror.

Autumnal London excites nothing but *ennui*.

—I would as soon dig in a lead mine!—

I record all this by way of apology for the infatuation with which I soon began to attach myself to the recollection of Emily Barnet. I had fitted up my second chamber as a sort of study, —a study of anything but books; for I neither was, nor pretended to be a reading man. But I studied there something more valuable in the perusal than printed paper. I studied my Self, —I studied the past. My leisure was the leisure of busy reverie. Whether seated, meerschäum in hand, before my sparkling fire, or pacing my rooms with listless steps, I was absorbed in living over again the events of the last few months, arm-in-arm with Cecil Danby.

And how wonderfully did poor Emily gain by the retrospection! How sweetly did her words and looks come back upon my memory! I could recal to mind only what was thoroughly attractive — thoroughly attaching.

I had never heard a sentiment escape her lips that was not noble and gracious. I had never seen her indulge in a look or an attitude but might have served as the model for an artist. An atmosphere of poetry surrounded her, — communicating a charm to all she touched, all she addressed. I recalled to mind the originality of her opinions, — the freshness of her ideas, — the vividness of her expressions; and no longer wondered that such companionship had estranged me from the vapid nothingness of the great world. Lady Harriet was equally brilliant, — more brilliant. But in her, not a touch of nature; in her not a gleam of the womanliness imparting so surpassing a charm to the conversation of Emily.

And this angelic being was lost to me for ever! — I had ascertained beyond a doubt that she was gone. At the very time I was harassing myself with expeditions into Bloomsbury, she was already on the high seas — on her way to the land of citron groves. I should see and

hear of her no more. Had she remained in England, perhaps we should have been equally alienated. A Miss Emily Barnet could never be more than a Miss Emily Barnet to Cis Danby. Still, it was something to be within reach of such an embellishment to one's existence; like knowing that a volume of choice poetry is at hand, which we may snatch up and peruse, when we find the realities of life growing too hard for our digestion.

Sometimes my reveries assumed a less favourable colour. After excess of solitude, as after all excesses, a reaction of feeling takes place. *Ne sait aimer qui ne sait haïr.* I used to gratify my irritation by uttering blasphemies against my Egeria. She had come upon me so strangely, and departed so mysteriously, nay, she was so disconnected with the world of which I formed a part, that I began almost to doubt her very existence. She was a *feu follet*, a will-o'-the-wisp.—“Earth hath its bubbles and she was of them.” I thought of

Melusina the sorceress, beloved by the Comte de Poitiers, whose face was that of an angel, whose body that of a serpent. I thought — but why recapitulate the foolish fancies of a lover or madman? — After all, if I had fallen into the snare of an enchantress, there was some pride in having retained, after a college education, the generous weakness which admits of becoming a dupe.

I struggled hard to get out of the net. Fine sentiment was not the order of the day. The pallid muse of Byron, in her black-crape weepers, had not yet brought despair and anguish into fashion. There was no encouragement to turn Octavian, or let grow one's beard. After all, if I had overrated my destinies,—if I had mistaken the salutation of the weird sisters on my arrival in London,—if I had fancied that I was to be king (of the *beau monde*) hereafter,—hereafter was a wide word,—I need not yet despair of my enthronization. Jack Harris might have made his way

faster; but his extinction would probably be rapid in proportion to his elevation, like the fusee of a rocket. Danby might be crowned with laurels; but they would, perhaps, wither while mine were flourishing!

I determined, in short, to box it out with destiny. I put myself in a Cribb-like attitude for a milling-match with my fortunes; and when at length even Lady Ormington's maternal sensibilities were insufficient to detain her in a city where nothing remained but Irish bricklayers and gentlemen compelled to live by rule, I dashed down to Melton, while *she* departed for the Hall; and by dint of drinking and riding at a pace—such as Satan might ride and drink when indulging in one of those “walks on earth” which Porson and multitudes of imitators have immortalized in the “verse that eternally saves” (even Satan),—I returned to Downing Street at the close of my six weeks' leave of absence, with the tremour of my heart transferred to my hands.

Between agitation of mind and body I was now thoroughly done up.

I went through my duties like one walking in his sleep. Unless when a packet arrived from Lisbon, I found it impossible to interest myself in the progress of public affairs. I had ascertained that the vessel which bore the d'Acunhas from this country had reached Portugal in safety. I knew that she was back again with her father,—back again at Cintra,—back again among those beloved haunts of cliff and shore which she used to paint with such bewildering enthusiasm. So much the better! — All that remained for me was to recommence life anew, from the point at which I had been distracted from my career by this luckless acquaintance. I had just attained my majority; an excellent epoch for a new start.

It happened that Chippenham, into whose society I was thrown by the business of the office, was nearly as much out of sorts with fortune as myself. After falling into the

snare set for him by Lady Votefilch, which *he* called falling desperately in love with Lady Theresa, his father, Lord Merepark, was kind enough to extricate him by an assurance in writing, that he was too young to settle, and that for many years to come it was out of his power to make a settlement upon him. It is well known that next to a pipe of Port, there is nothing so difficult to settle as the eldest son of a peer of the realm.

Chippenham had no means of helping himself. The Votefilchs dared not encourage him to brave and bring down on them the displeasure of a father, having three boroughs and a half at his disposal; and all that remained for him was to join with me in execrating the ruggedness of the course of true love, and in exorcising the little god by the power of a bigger — Bacchus versus Cupid. I scarcely know the love that could stand out against a couple of bottles of claret a day, topped up with garus punch.

The Flemish painters are greatest in their delineations of the most unsightly objects; and Hobbima is never more admirable than in a weedy ditch or mudpool. I am not so sure of a genius for depicting sloughs; and will consequently pass over the dissipation of two desperate boys, in the enjoyment of too much leisure, cash, and health, and finding an apology for their own vicious inclinations, in the pretext of having a secret sorrow to escape from. I had every prospect of becoming "*un de ces enfans du siècle, caducs avant d'avoir vécu, et fanfarons de désillusions.*" Now-a-days, when a young man is affected by a fever of the heart, or ague of the mind, such as the feelings which drove us into folly, he goes abroad. The Continent is a mighty safety-valve. It is surprising the quantity of vice that escapes in that direction. But during the war, people were obliged to stay and sow their wild oats in London; and fertile was the crop ever ripe for the sickle!—The coffee-room at Stevens's could tell

tales if it chose !—But it had better hold its tongue.

If the brilliant coteries of the fashionable world had been unable to efface the impression made upon me by the fascinations of Emily, it was not likely that the unrefined, unlettered heroines, with whom I was now in contact, should obliterate that charming recollection. It required all the madness of the orgies to render me sufficiently blind and deaf to support their company, even for an hour. I can understand the fable of the Sirens having been invented for such creatures ; only that in modern times one is forced to put cotton in one's ears to avoid the disgust of their discourse, instead of the fascination of their song.

Do what I would, however,—laugh and listen, or listen and sneer,—eat, drink, and be merry, or merely drink and be sad,—the ever-haunting face and form were still before me. My follies and vices appeared to add new force to the vividness of that first impression. As the trea-

asures of Herculaneum and Pompeii have been preserved in pristine freshness by showers of cinders, the lava, intended for the destruction of the image cherished in my heart, served for its preservation.

The only sacrifice, the only victim, was myself. After months of vulgar dissipation, I found myself more irritable in temper, more infirm in health, and thoroughly disgusted with my profligate companions. People were returning to town again; but whether they came or stayed away, I cared not. Parliament was about to unloose its thousand tongues, — but whether they wagged wisely, or too well, was a matter of indifference. A cloud was upon my spirit. I was only half a coxcomb. I seldom appeared in Lady Ormington's coterie, — never in those of her gay associates. I was becoming a lost man.

One day,—it was but a few before the meeting of parliament, and I was beginning to anticipate Lord Ormington's presence, superadded

to my domestic displeasures,—when I was struck by the elongated visage of Herries, issuing from the Blue Chamber at the Foreign Office.

“What the deuce is the matter, Hal?” cried Chippenham. “Is Grimgruffinhoff vicious this morning? Has he found out a false concord, pray, in your last despatch, or—”

To our great surprise, Herries, who was the meekest of mankind, replied by dashing down the papers he held in his hand upon the table, with the addition of an interjection not to be found in any polite dictionary.

“My dear fellow, you seem horrifically out of sorts?” said I, looking up from my desk, —almost envying him the power of being in a rage at anything so small as His Majesty’s Secretariate of State.

“And so would you,” cried Herries, white with suppressed ire, “if, after having drudged here, as I have been doing for the last fourteen months, without even applying for a day’s holiday, and being, at length, on the eve of asking

for two months' leave, for the purpose of—
of—no matter!—”

“ Well, well, we will take the purpose for granted. If, after all this, you say, we were to—what?—”

“ To be sent pitching over the Bay of Biscay, in the month of December, to deliver despatches to Sir Charles Stuart, which would be quite as safe in the hands of John the porter!”

“ Off to Lisbon?—” cried Chippenham—
Percy—all of us at once.

“ Lucky dog!” added I, in a lower tone, and no longer in chorus.

“ Lucky?—” exclaimed Herries, angrily taking me up. “ I should like to see *you* resign yourself to such luck! I should like to see Lord Votefilch send any one of you on such an expedition! He knows better. There would be fathers and mothers, or, rather, ayes and noes after him, in no time. It is only because I have no parliamentary interest

to back me — because I am *fiis de mes œuvres*."

"Hush, hush!—" cried Chippenham, who really liked Herries, and saw that he was committing himself.

"Poor Hal!—" added Percy, provokingly. "It shan't be sent to Lisbon. It shan't sail up the Tagus. It shall stay at home and eat its Christmas turkey by its own fireside."

For my part I said nothing. I was wrapt in cogitation. What if I could obtain to be sent in his room? Not a moment to be lost! I explained myself to Herries. He was quite sincere in his detestation of the appointment. It was not a *nolo episcopari* opposition, and he hastened, hand-in-hand with me, to Lord Votefilch, representing that I was exceedingly ambitious of replacing him; that I was slightly acquainted with the Portuguese language; that my health, which was in a declining state, would be materially benefited by a sea voyage, and that the services of Mr. Herries were, just

then, peculiarly in request in the office, for putting in train the arrangement of certain official documents, previous to the meeting of parliament, which had been especially recommended to his diligence by the Lords of the Treasury.

My preamble went for nothing,—for worse than nothing,—for an impertinent interference with authority ;—but this last argument decided the matter, and I was desired to hold myself in readiness to start for Falmouth that very night. Not a human being was in my confidence, as regarded my loves and likings ; and this sudden application was, consequently, a thunderbolt in the office. Herries thought me a fool ;—all the rest, mad.—Had Lord Ormington been in town, the thing would probably have been prevented. As it was, I found it easy to persuade my mother that I had been selected by Government as a confidential agent for a difficult duty ; and, though she wept a little, and begged me to take care and not put my-

self in the way of the plague or the yellow fever, she was comforted when I promised to send her home, by return of packet, hanks of Lisbon chains and a "wilderness of monkeys." She still continued to murmur something about Lisbon being such a dangerous place, and to beg me to take care of the earthquake; but turning a deaf ear to her maternal anxieties, I hurried away to issue my last instructions to Tim, and a long farewell to the convolvulus chamber.

My preparations were easily achieved. I bequeathed to Lady Ormington the settlement of my Christmas bills. Government was my courier.

Facta etenim et vitas hominum suspendit ab astris !

My chaise was at the door,
My transport on the sea ;

—and an announcement in the next day's Morning Post, that, "last evening the Hon. Cecil Danby left the Foreign Office with despatches

for His Majesty's minister at Lisbon," contained all the adieux necessary to my disconsolate friends and creditors.

Apart from the hope of seeing Emily again, there was something in the suddenness of the measure that imparted piquancy to my plan. As I rattled along the road, at the pace which depositaries of despatch boxes contrived in those days to be rattled, I could not help picturing to myself the surprise of Lord Ormington, on his arrival in town, at finding that, without departing from our compact, I had contrived to distance both him and Messrs. Hanmer and Snatch. It was a triumph, too, to know that I should escape the mortification of being omitted among the invited to Danby's wedding; which the newspapers assured the world was to take place soon after Christmas. Parthian-like, I was intent upon leaving wounds behind me, as I posted it along.

My enthusiasm, however, began to relax as the hurry and excitement of departure gra-

dually subsided. By the moment of embarkation, I saw things in their true light, which was far from a pleasant one; and, without sharing my mother's apprehensions of being swallowed up, either in the Bay of Biscay or a second Lisbon earthquake, began to perceive that the bright eyes of my inscrutable divinity were leading me strangely out of my latitude.

Not that the sight of the dark blue waters inspired me with the nausea so afflicting to the many.—As nurses reprove a squeamish child with the assurance that “people sick in a carriage weren't never born to ride in one,”—I am of opinion that a sea-sick man was not born to sail in his own yacht; and am proud to declare that the heaviest swell finds me enjoying the robust health becoming a gentleman.

Still, the sea in December!—the bay of Biscay at Christmas!—The perils and inconveniences of the ensuing three weeks, were such as would

have reconciled me, without further argument, to find myself back again in poor Hanover Square. La Bruyère, or some other of the fellows whose sayings one is always remembering, observes that a woman must be charming indeed whose husband does not wish himself unmarried at least ten times a day. So a sea-voyage must happen under circumstances peculiarly favourable, if a man do not wish himself on dry land, forty-eight times in the course of the twenty-four hours. I shall never forget the fervour of my thanks to Providence when I found myself at length going it easy on the smooth waters of the Tagus !

“ His Majesty’s service !—” I could not of course forget that I and my despatch-box were his Majesty’s.—Though conscious that the magnet which drew me to the shores of Portugal resided in a quinta at Cintra, I was forced to go through the ceremony of delivering my despatches, my notes confidential, and a day’s worth of private explanation, to the individual

and collective majesty of the mission, before I even named the name of Barnet.

But how to do justice to the bore of being cross-examined by an ambassador, a secretary, a private secretary, and three *attachés* :—in the first place, concerning the mysteries of their calling as connected with the fountain-head in Downing Street ; and in the next, concerning all that insignificant chit-chat of London, which becomes so important the moment one gets out of earshot of its babble. Next to the smell of the quays at Belem, and the spectacle of their squalid population, the investigation I was compelled to undergo was the most disgusting incident of my arrival.

Let it not meanwhile be supposed that, at the mature age of one-and-twenty, I was young enough to be beguiled into precipitate inquiries in my turn. For worlds I would not have evinced the slightest curiosity concerning anything or anybody in Lisbon. Among my supercilious diplomatic brethren, I chose to be better

acquainted with all that was going on at the seat of war, than Wellington or Beresford. I was so good as to tell them what had been and would be again ; and described to them the state of parties in Lisbon, with a graphic accuracy that obtained me unlimited credit.

No occasion to explain how much of my time had been spent the preceding summer in company with those to whom the welfare of Portugal was as vital air ; and the beauties of the Tagus a sacred recollection !

The rock of Lisbon was, in fact, scarcely more familiar to me now that I had sailed under its clifted heights, or the monastery of Mafra now that my eyes had rested upon its majestic walls, than when described by the glowing and eloquent partiality of Emily. Long before we dropped anchor in the Tagus, I could have painted, as after a circumstantial sketch, the towers of St. Julien, and the castle of Belem,—the white walls of the various quintas and convents, peeping from among their gardens of

evergreens,—the imposing palace of the Ajuda —the venerable portal of St. Jeronymo—and the lofty towers of the mother church, reflected upon the surface of the waters.

I could almost have wished myself fated to know them *only* by description; for Heaven knows the bright and varied scene gained little by its accompaniments of sound or smell. A more ill-favoured, ill-savoured community than the rabble of the quays of Belem, is scarcely to be imagined; and for many days after my arrival, I was tempted hourly to invoke as ideal the perfume of orange trees and sound of guitars wherewith my romantic friends had chosen to enliven their descriptions. The wrangling of beggars, the grunting of pigs, and the *bouquet* of these and other *animaux immondes*, such as barefooted friars, appealed only too energetically to my patience.

My sense of smell is at all times painfully acute. The least ostensibly developed, it is by no means the least susceptible of the senses.

Strange that we have no word definitive of its imperfection or extinction! — There are the blind and the deaf, there are even the near-sighted and the dunny; but we want a name for those fortunate individuals who walk through a fishmarket or a glue manufactory, without wincing; or a thymy woodland or choice conservatory, without rapture. For my own part, I protest that my most vivid anticipation of the joys of Eden, consists in the aromatic gales described by Milton, as

Able to cure all sadness but despair.

However excruciating the torture of my olfactory nerves at Belem. I was nevertheless amply rewarded at a subsequent period, when traversing some of those exquisite valleys on the banks of the Mondego, shrubbed over with lavender and rosemary, or balsamic thickets of the gum-cistus; whose lofty baytrees, cypresses, or cedars, bathing in intense sunshine, impart an almost Oriental spiciness to the

atmosphere. But I had much to undergo in the interval. My irritability, after three days spent at an Hotel reeking with garlic and tobacco, and enlivened eighteen hours of the twenty-four by the incessant drumming and fifing of a military parade, was the precursor of illness. I had often known sea voyages produce the most deleterious effects upon the constitution, when they fail to affect it in the usual manner; but in my own instance, I apprehended nothing. Never having experienced an hour's ill-health, I scoffed at the idea of sickness; and for the first three or four days after landing, attributed my disorder to change of climate, change of food, or fatigue.

I felt almost insulted when advised to see the embassy physician. I was still more angry when the said physician, having been peremptorily introduced into my room by one of the *attachés*, talked of bleeding and chicken-broth! My indignation however, was to little purpose; for, three days afterwards, the ignominy of a

tonsured head was inflicted upon me, without my being conscious of the offence ! Instead of making my way to Cintra, I became delirious ; in imminent danger from the pároxysms of a bilious fever !

Poor Lady Ormington !—How little had she suspected when, in our farewell interview, she bade me beware of the plague and yellow fever, that her darling was carrying with him the germ of a disorder equally perilous ! There was every chance that instead of marmozets and Lisbon chains, the packet which conveyed back to England intelligence of our safe arrival would also carry news I was sleeping my last sleep in the church-yard of Saint Jeronymo.

If it had, I very much doubt whether any of them would have cared. I was spared all efforts of sensibility on that or any other point ; for during the ensuing three weeks my mind was in a state of torpor. I knew not even that I suffered ; though, judging from

the result my sufferings must have been severe, for when my danger ceased my weakness was as that of a child.

One of my first impressions was a painful consciousness that, though thus thrust among strangers to sicken, and all but die, I had experienced as much sympathy and kindness among them, as I should have done among my own people, and in my father's house. This is a confession, by the way, which people are apt to make as a reflexion upon their relations, whereas it disgraces only themselves. It is a case of rare misfortune when we are not loved by our nearest of kin, in proportion as we desire and deserve to excite affection. As to me,—but on this head I have enabled my readers to judge for themselves.

The most imaginative bard of my time, he whose poetry may be considered as the matrix of that of Byron, has favoured us, by way of a psychological curiosity, with a picture of one of his dreams, the result probably of opium,

which a recent traveller* has declared to be so exact a transcript of the scenery viewed from Mount Lebanon, that, when halting under the hoary cedars of the antique world, he could find no truer description of the landscape before him than the celebrated verses of Coleridge.

Are we to infer that to the inspired brain of the poet, that Oriental beatitude was literally manifested? "There are more things in Heaven and earth than were dreamt of" in the philosophy of Horatio. But there are more things in the human mind than were dreamt of even by Hamlet, even by Shakspeare. May there not even exist senses still imperfectly defined by physiological science? May there not be mysteries of the soul still undeveloped, indicated only by the divining rod of the initiated, a mockery to the learned, but of profound conviction to more delicate organi-

* Lord Lindsey.

zations conscious of magnetic influences—such as might be esteemed a supernatural visitation, did aught in our frail and miserable nature seem to entitle us to communication with the invisible world?—

I can have no object in deceiving myself or others ; and I swear that during my illness at Belem my chamber was haunted ! I solemnly protest that no spot or scene I ever visited in health and strength, is more vividly impressed upon my memory than the realms in which I seemed to live and move, and have my being, during the period in which my physicians pronounced me to be labouring under mental excitement. To me, Portugal was still *terra incognita*. My experience of the landscape scenery of my own country was of the most prosaic nature ; Ormington Hall, situated in the ugliest county in England,—Oxford—Putney. I had seen nothing, I knew nothing ; nor had even art done aught to expand or refine my ideas of the picturesque. Claude

and Poussin, Salvator and Ruysdael, had spread their transcript of the beauties of nature vainly before my eyes. All I knew was, that the prevailing colour of a landscape is green, and that the prevailing colour of a sky had *better* be blue.

But the existence I seemed to lead at the time when all was seeming, lay in a land whose acclivities were clothed with the pale foliage of the olive; whose rivers ran among overtopping wildernesses of canes and reeds; whose lofty bay-trees extended their deep, fragrant, glossy, glorious growth like the tree of which David sang in his hour of inspiration; whose rocks were overshadowed with the pink blossoms of the oleander, or the blue and vaporous bloom of the rosmarinus; whose rich groups of cork-trees, through which the gleam of marble aqueducts was apparent in the distance, afforded shade from the noontide heat to droves of buffaloes; whose bamboo fences were surmounted by the spiky leaves of the aloe and

entwined with convolvuli of very different hue from those of my poor old blue chamber in Hanover Square !

Was this prescience ?—Was the influence of the land already strong upon my spirit ?—Was the companionship that appeared to haunt me in those peculiar and well-remembered scenes, also a delusion ?—Were the words breathed in my ears by her who appeared to be ever present with me, words of warning ?—I dare not dwell upon these speculations ! I am aware that, in this age of grovelling materialism, everything savouring of a pretence to higher sources of intelligence is condemned as the impertinence of a fool or the vagary of a madman. Perhaps I *was* mad. I will even admit that I was mad. But this I know, that I would exchange the more rational moments of my existence for a single day or night of that stage of lunacy, which seemed to transport me to the banks of the limpid

Mondego, "with one fair spirit for my minister."

So conscious was I even then of the ridicule attached to my faith in this "supernatural soliciting," that my first inquiry on my restoration to health regarded the degree to which my exclamations might have betrayed my secret during my illness. I interrogated my nurse. I questioned poor, faithful Tim, who had lain day and night like a dog at my bedside. I challenged, with a smile, my young friends of the embassy. But in vain. The Portuguese nurse and Irish groom admitted that I had raved like a man possessed; but they did not seem to know whether by angel or devil. As to the *attachés*, they talked about my being light-headed, but were not much disposed to be at the trouble of knitting up the ravelled skein of my perplexities.

All I knew with certainty was, that my restoration to health had snatched me from

illusions worth an empire; and that the foul, filthy, sweltering, vermin-haunted, yelling, drumming, strumming Belem which presented itself before me in fetid reality, was a very inferior spot to the city of Morisco convents and marble palaces, which had risen out of the blue waters of the Tagus in my land of Thought.

Bales of letters had arrived for me by the packet, during my illness; Christmas bills,—reproaches on pink paper,—and in black and white (from Messrs. Hanmer and Snatch,) Lord Ormington's formal signification of his displeasure that I should have solicited from Government an appointment necessitating my absence from England, precisely at a moment so fraught with interest to the Danby family as the approaching marriage of my brother.

But this was not all. The pragmatistical firm in Southampton Buildings, patented by his Right Hon. Lordship with the privilege of lecturing me in his name, was furthermore

pleased to intimate that, "should my visit to Portugal purport the renewal of my connection with a certain family, which by their means had been casually introduced to my acquaintance, they were instructed to inform me, that my income would be peremptorily suspended on the slightest intimation of anything tending to promote a nearer alliance."

A long shot, and wide of the mark!—I had been more than a month at Lisbon, without even attempting to obtain information concerning the persons thus harshly pointed out to my avoidance. I knew, indeed, that as regarded the d'Acunhas, I might as well have walked to Whitechapel, inquiring all the way for a family of the name of Smith; and with respect to Emily, felt a natural hesitation about pointing her out to the notice of the young gentlemen in kid gloves, who manœuvred the international relations between England and Portugal.

Lisbon and its environs abounded at that

time in English merchants. The sealing up or corking up of France, rendered the fierce potations of Spain and Portugal our sole resource against the humid climate of Great Britain. I determined to defer my inquiries till I could visit Cintra in person. The prohibitions contained in the thirteen-and-fourpenny epistle of Messrs. Hanmer and Snatch, having served only to stimulate my impatience of the sick room, and to determine me upon attempting an airing, full a fortnight earlier than the measure was sanctioned by that remarkably obtuse body called the faculty.

CHAPTER II.

J'étudiais cette femme avec un culte égal à celui qu'apportent les peintres devant les lignes pures et les chastes contours des Madones de Raphaël ou de Cimabue. J'interrogeais en silence l'expression de son visage, afin de deviner ce qui se passait en elle. J'écoutais le son de sa voix ; j'épiaus un sourire, je la regardais marcher. Que vous dirai-je ? C'était mon idole, la Madone que je m'étais choisie.

ALPHONSE BROU.

Jucundum cùm ætas florida ver ageret.

CATULL. *Epig.* 67.

Few people pass through life without having experienced the rapture of convalescence. Socrates has described the delicious itching of the human flesh on the removal of manacles, as worthy the endurance of bondage to appreciate ; and it is quite as well worth while to be ill, for the satisfaction of finding oneself

well again. The transition from the stagnant atmosphere of a sick room, from lugubrious faces and presages of evil, to the blessed and revivifying light of day, with its snatches of fragrant breezes, its "lapse of streams and tune of birds," is like a foretaste of heaven.

Above all, *I* had every plea for exultation on finding myself for the first time transported beyond the confines of that fair-looking and foul-smelling capital of the land of oranges and lemons. I, who had come so far,—who had defied my father and all his solicitors, — my creditors and all their small accounts, — for the sole object of looking once more upon the most angelic of human faces, had indeed cause to murmur against the captivity which beset me on my arrival, and to triumph in my enfranchisement.

To attempt an excursion to Cintra on the first day, or on every one of the early days of returning health, was of course impossible.

Mais tout vient à point pour qui sait attendre.
In a week, I might push my excursions as far as the Richmond of Lisbon. Cintra was not about to move from its pedestal. In a week, I might hold the hand of Emily in mine !

I am ashamed to say how many days that week appeared to contain !—From the moment I felt sure of our approaching reunion, my impatience was redoubled. I felt as if the yearning of my heart must kill me, unless speedily gratified. All the wild imaginings of my dreams had only stimulated my ardour. I began to appreciate the excellence of Emily as I had never understood it before. The earnestness of her character,—its truthfulness—its cordiality ;—the total absence of pretension or pretence, were merits which my familiar acquaintance with the artificialities of the world rendered doubly attractive. I cannot understand how men of sense and feeling become enthralled by women whom they never see betray a natural emotion, or hear avow an

honest sentiment. To me, no charm so irresistible as the society of persons in whose faces are reflected the mutations of their minds, and whose remarks and replies arise out of the genuine impulses of the heart. I felt sure, for instance, that on entering Emily's presence, I should learn at once, either from her expansive smiles or cold severity, whether she resented my conduct; or whether her sudden departure from England had been equally a source of grief to *her* and to myself.

For I could not disguise to myself that, though an unavowed lover, I had spared no pains to recommend myself to her regard; that my attentions were such as should never have existed or never ceased to exist; and was resolved that, should I discover her regrets to have been as poignant as my own, I would not again sacrifice to worldly ambition, a treasure which the hand of Providence seemed to have placed expressly in my path. She should

be mine, or—I had not yet exactly fixed upon the alternative.

While placing her before me in the character of an affianced bride, I retouched in my memory the picture of her bright and beaming beauty; a picture that might have served as the image of youth or the type of spring,—so unrivalled was its freshness—so pure its colouring—so rounded its contours—so vivid its brilliancy! I often sat dwelling on the recollection of Emily, till I could have sworn that she was visibly present—my idol—my love—my wife! How I had wronged her, how wronged myself, not to have snatched her to my heart, long, weary months ago under that endearing designation, instead of leaving her exposed to the animadversions of the world!—

Spring was breaking ere my convalescence was sufficiently advanced to admit of extending my drives. For some time, indeed, the physicians insisted on my not venturing out un-

accompanied. Either the nature of my excitement or the suddenness of my former attack, rendered them cautious. At length, I was sufficiently strong to defy them.

“You may burn your books, my dear doctor!” said I to my kind attendant, on the day of my purposed expedition to Cintra. “I have better remedies in store than the forests of cascarilla you are inflicting on me. Within a week, I promise you I shall be no longer the same man. You will not know me. At all events, I shall disdain to know *you*, and pass you by as the summer wind, which you regard not.”

“So much the better,” cried Dr. A——, “so much the better! But I had rather you did not threaten me with so bright an eye, or so hurried a pulse. I have been writing a flourishing account of your amendment to-day, by Sir Charles’s desire, to Lord Ormington. Unless you lower your tone, sir, I will recal my bulletin till the next packet.”

I did not think it necessary to inquire of

the official Esculapius whether he had addressed his intelligence to his lordship through the medium of Southampton Buildings ; in short, I was too happy at that moment to trouble myself about kith or kin. I had done like the gods invoked by Nat. Lee in his tragedy,—“annihilated both time and space to make two lovers happy.” I had even overcome something *more* indomitable than time or space,—my own listless nature,—my own coxcombry ! I had braved the perils of earth and sea, the displeasure of Hanover Square, and the fury of the Bay of Biscay, in order to enjoy once more the intercourse of that brightest of human beings,—refined gold amid the baser metals of society !

Beautiful Cintra !—how I rejoiced to recognise in its rocky pinnacles all that Emily had so often described !—Two images seemed before me as we slowly ascended the *calçada* of that region of *quintas* ;—the sunny reality, with its white walls dotted amid glossy verdure, and

the picture imprinted on my imagination by the gentle voice so dear to me. Twofold enjoyment appeared to surround me.

Oh ! that odoriferous breath of gardens !—that vitality in the air, as of the young-eyed spring bursting into life and joy through a thousand blossoms !—I seemed to bear the burthen of life too lightly as I reached the first shrubby steep of Cintra, and looked up to the rocky heights crowned by the convent towers of Nossa Senhora da Penha. My heart was blithe as a bird. I was something better than Cecil Danby at that moment. I was a human being created to be happy and to confer happiness ; on the point of sharing my joyous thoughts and feelings with a being still more nobly constituted.

I inquired—that is, my Portuguese attendant inquired of a young vinhateiro, whom we met trudging down the hill with a pole slung across his shoulder, and a modinha upon his lips, in strict accordance with the season and the scene, whether he could direct us to the quinta of an English gentleman at Cintra.

“Inglese?” cried he, after the usual courteous “Viva!” of his country. “There are so many English. There is the general,—there is the commissary general,—there is the surgeon general,—there are twenty others who have quintas on the hill.”

“No—it was not a gentleman connected with the army.”

“A fidalgo, then?”

“No! not a fidalgo,—an old settler,—a merchant.”

“The Senhor Barnet!—” shouted the man with a gladsome countenance, as if the name had a cheering influence, as connected with goodness and beneficence. “*Nossa Senhora!* Who does not know the quinta of San José!”—

And he seemed to take pleasure in directing the coachman the number of turns to the right and left which were to convey us to the spot. Our progress was between stone walls, overtopped by the verdure of the ilex and the bay, and intersected here and there by the gates of

different quintas, enabling the eye to penetrate into the interior of their trimly gardens and orange-orchards. But to me, every foot of earth we traversed was holy ground. I thought of her surprise,—her welcome,—her eyes varying perhaps from the flash of joy to softening tears,—her grateful recognition of all I had braved, all I had forsaken, to prove myself worthy her regard. As we gradually accomplished the number of turns and twistings pointed out by the vinhateiro, my breath came so short, my heart beat so painfully, that I felt, if my expedition had been of much greater extent, I could not have supported the excess of my emotion. A sad admission for a coxcomb, to be shaken thus !—But I was recovering from an illness of two months' duration, and the inflictions of three physicians.

At length, we approached a gate of somewhat statelier appearance than the preceding ones,—which I recognized at once as that of San José by the peculiarity of a level grove

of evergreens, surmounted by a single ancient cypress of prodigious height, which constituted a landmark for the neighbourhood. Emily had described this to me as the first object that, at a distance, would speak to her of home.

We were at the gate. The house, a modest mansion of white stone, two stories in height, differed in no respect from the neighbouring quintas, save in lying more exposed to the road,—the whole façade being visible from the gates. But of all the human abodes I ever beheld, it presented, at that moment, the brightest aspect. The house was surrounded with almond trees, in all their effulgence of bloom. The air seemed actually brightened by the shower of pink and white blossoms, thrown out into stronger relief by the dark background of evergreens formed by a lofty pine-grove to the rear of the quinta.

The white mansion on which the sun was pouring its brightness, as if delighting to salute so fairy-like a scene, encompassed by a wilder-

ness of blossoms, looked like a fair girl arrayed for her bridal. It was afternoon. The nightingales, nowhere more mellifluous than on the shores of the Tagus, were commencing their song in those gladsome thickets. 'Twas just in such a sunshiny place I could have desired to feast my eyes, once more, upon the smiling face of Emily.

The gates were thrown open, but I would not let the carriage drive in. I did not feel sufficiently authorized in acquaintanceship to demand admittance. Two gentlemen were sauntering on the broad gravel-walk under the almond trees;—elderly men,—one of them, probably, the proprietor of the quinta.

Alighting from the carriage, I inquired of the porter whether that were Mr. Barnet, — pointing towards the gentlemen, one of whom had stopped short in his walk, attracted by the jarring of the gates, and was looking earnestly towards me; so earnestly, that on his answering in the affirmative, I thought it better

to hasten at once towards him, and explain the object of my visit. Luckily for my nervous tremours, he came forwards to meet me.

“ I have taken the liberty, sir,” said I, addressing the old gentleman, hat in hand, with the most deprecating politeness, “ to intrude upon you, in the hope that—”

“ Is she coming ?—” demanded he, interrupting me, in a whisper, as if apprehensive of being overheard by his companion.

“ My name is Danby. I have not the honour of being personally known to you,” said I, concluding that he mistook me for some other person.

“ Is she coming ?—” he repeated, in precisely the same tone, and keeping the same intense look of inquiry fixed upon my face.

“ You are under some mistake, I fear, sir,” I replied, beginning to fancy that I, too, must be in error. “ I had the honour of being acquainted in England with your daughter ; and—”

“Is she coming?”—again repeated the old man, in precisely the same tone, and with a fixedness of aspect that began to excite vague uneasiness in my mind. I could scarcely doubt that I was addressing a person of disturbed intellect: even before I perceived that the individual by whom he was accompanied on my entrance, and who had now rejoined him, was making signs of intelligence to me to desist from the conversation. All the notice vouchsafed by Mr. Barnet to this interruption, consisted in turning towards him with the same sort of glaring scrutiny he had previously bestowed upon me, and the reiteration of the same simple question, uttered in the same stern whisper,—“Is she coming?”—

“Presently, presently!”—replied his companion, in the coaxing tone used to deceive children and maniacs. “But you have had a long walk, sir. Supposing we go in and rest ourselves?—This gentleman has promised that he will come and visit you another time!”

“Another time?”—muttered the old man, folding his hands, and in a tone of deep despair.

“It is always another time!”—

Nevertheless he quietly took the arm extended towards him by his companion, (who made signs to me to await his return in the garden,) and submissively attempted a few steps towards the house. In a moment, however, he stopped, as if some new idea had entered his mind, and returned suddenly towards me. “At least, before I go, let him tell me whether she is coming?”—said he, in precisely his former tone and manner. Then approaching me and laying his hand familiarly on my arm, he inclined his white face closer towards my ear to falter in a lower whisper. “I will tell none of them if you will let me hear the truth.—You said you knew Emily.—Is she—*is she coming?*—”

“I had thought to find her here, sir,” said I, painfully agitated, but not daring to refuse him an answer. “It is many months since we met. I learned with satisfaction her safe ar-

rival in Portugal; the hope of meeting her, indeed, was one of my inducements to visit Lisbon."

"Then you will be my friend,—you will go in search of her for me!" cried he, suddenly, giving way to a burst of passionate feeling. "You knew Emily,—you valued her,—perhaps you loved her?—But no! you were not her father.—You would not love her as I loved her.—You could not have found the cruel courage to send her away from you, that she might be safe in happy England,—safe from the terrors of war,—safe from the ruin which is overwhelming Portugal and all belonging to her.—Do you know how it fared with my girl, in England?—my beautiful girl,—my pride—my glory,—the comfort of my old age!—They persecuted her,—they vilified her,—they killed her for me, sir!—The curse of God light upon them in everlasting fire, for the deed!—They—they—but is she coming?"—said he, suddenly dropping his infuriated accents into his

former tone, with a mild earnestness that made my flesh creep!—

“If you agitate yourself in this manner, Mr. Barnet,” interposed his companion in a tone of authority betraying the keeper, “I shall not be able to allow you a walk in the garden again to-morrow. You are distressing this gentleman, a stranger to you.”

“No! not a stranger!”—interrupted poor Barnet, again laying his hand upon my arm. “I can see by his face that he is no stranger. He is grieving for me,—he is grieving for Emily!—He knows that it will be a long time before they let my child come back to me again. —You see he dares not answer me when I ask for her!—The way with you all!—No one,—no one will say whether she is coming!—You told me your name just now?”—cried he, stopping short, and again intently regarding me.

“Danby, —Cecil Danby!—”

“I should know it,—I seem to know it,—” he exclaimed, shrugging his shoulders impatiently.

“Somehow or other, I forget everything now. Nothing seems to stay with me.—My girl would not stay with me.—Poor Emily would not remain at San José.—They tell me I shall see her again.—But *when*!—Can *you*, tell me when?—*you*, sir!—Mr. Danby,—Englishman,—what are you?—Is she coming, I say!—is she coming?—”

“You had better retire, he is always thus excited in the presence of strangers,” observed his companion, with the insensibility of a person habituated to such scenes. “I will rejoin you at the lodge, as soon as I have succeeded in restoring him to composure.”

“How dare you call any one a stranger who comes to San José to demand hospitality in the name of my daughter?—” cried the old man, turning fiercely upon him. “Don’t you know that Emily is still mistress here? Don’t you know that, when she comes back to me, her first care will be to drive out of the house the brute who has presumed to tyrannize over

her poor old father,—to beat me like a child, —me, a grey-headed man!—She loved me very dearly, sir,” he continued, abruptly addressing me. “Though she left me, she loved me very dearly.—Come with me into the house, and you shall see the picture she drew of me. It is not finished, they say.—There was not time to finish it, ere they took her from me. But she is coming back to finish it;—she ought to have been here by this time.—The flowers are come, you see,” said he, pointing to the almond trees around us, “and the birds are singing,—and the sun shining,—just as if Emily were here again.—Bright, bright!—it is all so bright and beaming, that my poor head and my heart ache with it.—It is a very sad time the spring!—*Is she coming, sir*, that you are here to meet her?—Ha! ha! ha! We shall disappoint them yet.—They think they have buried her.—But I know better! —I know,—I *know*—that she is coming!”

He had now locked his arm fast in mine,

and a request was whispered to me, by his attendant, that I would lend my assistance towards restoring him to tranquillity, by accompanying him into the quinta. The proposal was a welcome one, for my own strength was failing me.

As we approached the house, the hall-door was thrown open by two servants, who preceded us into a large saloon, the *jalousies* of which were closed ; so that, entering it from the dazzling sunshine, I could not, at first, distinguish the objects it contained. My first impulse was to stagger to a seat. If the dreadful surmises excited by the ravings of the poor maniac before me should be grounded in truth !—if Emily should be really gone,—gone for ever !—

One word addressed to the keeper, who was standing at only a few paces distance, would have determined the matter. But I had not courage to give it utterance. I had not courage to know the worst. A deathly faint-

ness came over me. I seemed to distinguish in the chamber that peculiar perfume of vanille, so indicative of her presence. Like old Barnet, I could scarcely refrain from exclaiming, in a frantic whisper,—“Is she coming?—”

A few minutes afterwards, (I conclude that minutes only had elapsed,) I found myself reclining in the same chair, with a chilly sensation creeping over me;—on one side, the lunatic, with his unmeaning eyes peering into my face; on the other the keeper, who was holding my hand in his, as if feeling my pulse.—Great God! was he going to exercise his horrible functions upon *me*?—

“He is recovering. I told you, Mr. Barnet, sir, that you would harass him by your wild questions,” said the man, addressing, in a surly tone, his unfortunate charge. “How can you expect that your friends will continue to visit you, if you flurry and vex them in this manner?”

“He is not my friend. He is *her* friend. *Her* friends will always be indulgent with me!”

ejaculated the poor old man ; and he leaned over me, with a look so piteous that I struggled doubly hard to recover strength and extricate myself from my dreadful position.

By degrees, my eyes accustomed themselves to the gloom of the darkened chamber ; I could now perceive that it contained a thousand indications of female habitation. There were musical instruments,—books,—flowers. There was an embroidery frame upon the table ; and a lory chained to a stand, sidling restlessly to be noticed, as if impatient of the darkness and stillness of the place. My fears began to subside. Why had I listened to the incoherences of a madman ?—Emily was probably in the house.—It was all I could do to refrain from demanding, in my turn, of the keeper whether she were coming.—The contagion seemed to have touched my brain.—At length I rose feebly from my chair.—

“ These are Emily’s books,—Emily’s work,” —whispered the poor old gentleman, leading me courteously to the table. “ If she were here,

sir, she would show them to you, and sing to you, and bid you welome. See! there is the mark left in her favourite volume,"—he continued, showing me a sprig of withered myrtle placed between the pages of Burns, a writer we had often, very often, discussed and praised together. "It is so strange that she does not come and finish all these things! People do not leave their work incomplete, and their mark in a book, week after week, in this way. I can't tell you how many days have passed, sir, since I heard the sound of music in this room. You know how she used to sing! Never was there heard such a voice on earth! 'Nel silenzio!'—did you ever hear her sing 'Nel silenzio?'—Banti never attempted it after she had heard my Emily.—And now, not a note!—not a single note!—nothing, —nothing!—So still that you may hear all day the clinking of poor Yilko's chain.—I should send it away, but that it was hers. The poor bird seems watching for her with me.—Every one is watching for her.—"

I shuddered. I was beginning to feel an instinctive horror of the concluding phrase so indicative of his bewilderment.—This time, he spared me.—

“Supposing we go and look for her?”—cried he, with a vacant smile, as if struck with a bright idea. “I know where they took her, when she was carried away from San José; and if we were to go and call her, together, very likely she might come back to us. Ask the gentleman to accompany me. He will not, unless *you* ask him. No one does anything here that you do not bid them,” said he, addressing his keeper, with a significant look.

“Will you promise me, sir, if we humour you, to return quietly home, and take a few hours’ rest?”—was the man’s prudent reply: “you know you have not closed your eyes these two nights.”

“Would you have had me sleep, when Emily had promised me a visitor?”—demanded poor Barnett, with one of those cunning smiles

peculiar to madmen. "But I *have* welcomed him, you see, in spite of you. I have shown him her books,—her flowers,—her bird ;—and now I will take him to her,—that is, if you will allow me."

"If you would so far indulge him, it would be an act of charity," said the keeper, drawing me aside. "For several days past, Mr. Barnet's paroxysms have been dreadful. To-day he is more subdued ; and if I could only bring him to shed tears, as he usually does after that favourite walk, it would ensure him the comfort of a night's sleep."

"I am myself, as you perceive, in so feeble a condition,—" I was beginning.

"*Feeble !*"—interrupted the lunatic, who was eagerly listening. "No matter !—You shall lean on my arm.—I will support you.—We will go together and visit Emily.—It is but a step.—Allan, the key !—You are a good fellow, though brutal. You shall come with us. There,—softly !—don't hurry yourself, Mr.—"

What did you say was your name?—Danby? Don't hurry yourself.—She will wait for us.—She was always so good,—so patient. I never heard her chide so much as a dog!—She will wait—she will wait.—”

And continuing to mutter praises of his daughter, he led me through a suite of rooms, the keeper closely following; one of which, from various articles of female attire lying about, as well as from a peculiar look of neatness and elegance, I concluded to be the chamber of Miss Barnet.

“She is not here, you see!” said the old man, pausing a moment, opposite to the cold white bed. “She loved this room, though.—Look!—there is her father's picture hanging to the wall,—opposite to the spot where, when she was a little, little child, she used to kneel down night and morning, and pray to God to bless him.—No one ever prays here for me now.—God has forsaken the house!—Ichabod! My glory has departed!—”

“ You promised, sir, to take this gentleman to visit her,” interposed the keeper, discerning symptoms of growing excitement, connected, I suppose, with the spot.—“ You must not break your word.”

“ Who talked of breaking my word?—Am I not a gentleman still?—My daughter has forsaken me.—The French have burned my stores, — have ravaged my vineyards, — have ruined *me*, — have devastated Portugal. — But I am a gentleman, I hope, for all that.—Don’t hurry me, Allan; —you know I cannot bear being hurried! — I — I am a gentleman. I never thought of breaking my word.”—

And with stealthy footsteps, he made his way out of the room, and attempted to open the glass-doors of a small adjoining vestibule that seemed to communicate with the garden. Allan immediately took a key from his pocket, and enabled us to pass; then, after traversing a long gravel walk, skirted on either side by wall-like espaliers of closely shaven myrtle,

cut into fanciful arcades, we reached the extremity of the garden ; and again, the keeper produced his pass key, and unlocked the post-ern door of a boundary wall.

We were now in an orange grove ; a spot of little interest in the eyes of any inhabitant of Portugal, to whom the aspect of the glossy verdure, golden fruit, or snowy and richly scented blossoms of that Hesperian tree, are as uninteresting as an apple-orchard to ourselves.

But it happened to be the first realization to *my* eyes of a scene so often and so vividly described by Emily, in association with the scenes and sports of her childhood.

“ This was her play-ground, sir,”—said old Barnet, pointing among the smooth stems of the venerable trees, proud with the burthen of their golden treasures,—“ and yonder—”

At that moment, Allan unlocked a third door in the exterior wall, and I found myself in a small green enclosure,—the turf of which, rising

here and there into mounds of a peculiar form.

—But why describe all this?—

The old man led me slowly, reverently, and silently, to the remotest corner of the little enclosure ; over which, the boughs of a fine bay-tree, overhanging from the gardens of the quinta, extended their shade.—There was a stone slab on the ground ;—placed there very recently, —for the rough clay around it had not yet attained a vestige of verdure, and a few displaced sods still lay withering around.

“ This, as you are probably aware, sir, is the English burying-ground,” said Allan, breathing his hateful whisper confidentially into my ear. “ I am not often able to indulge him with a visit.—I dare not bring him here alone Look ! ”—

The poor old man was down on his knees, with his head bowed upon the stone,—tracing with his trembling finger the letters engraven there :—

Pray for the Soul
of

EMILY BARNET,

Aged eighteen years.

Died on the 17th of February, 1811.

Ora pro me.

Only three weeks in the grave!—The earth scarcely closed over that beloved face!—Oh! misery—misery!—Had I hastened to San José on my disembarkation, I had been in time to save her,—to spare the shattered reason of her wretched father!—Why—why thus tardy in my atonement?—

For she had died of a broken heart.—That which the keeper, Allan, called a rapid decline, was the anguish of a broken heart. I heard all, soon afterwards, from the worthy man whose aid was now once more called in to rescue me from the grave. He had attended her. He had been her friend,—her confidant. Having detected a moral influence as the origin of her disorder, she had owned to him on her death-bed, that her sudden return to Lisbon was

caused by the infamous rumours spread concerning her in England, by a noble family, who resented the attentions she had received from one of its members.

“The spiritless man whom my father had appointed my guardian,” murmured the dying girl, “forsook his charge in the dread of these people’s displeasure. He sent me from his house;—he even dared to accuse me of levity,—of duplicity,—of shame!—But that was not all. He—he for whose sake I bore all this,—he, by whose groundless boasts I was exposed to such indignity,—*he*, too, shunned me in my disgrace.—He deigned not so much as make one inquiry after her whom he had thus ungratefully injured!—But no matter!—May God forgive him, as I do!”—

When this was told me, I felt that not even the prayers of that sinless being could procure me the pardon of Heaven! Tears flowed from the eyes of my kindly attendant, as he adverted to her touching death-bed. All human skill

had been unavailing.—She refused to be comforted — she disdained to live ;— but expired in peace and charity with all men—a saint—a martyr !—

By a strange coincidence, he had closed her eyes on the very night he was first summoned to attend on me. Two hours after witnessing the departure of that tortured spirit, he had hastened to my bedside. He had scarcely resigned her clay-cold hand, when my burning one claimed his ministry in its place !—

And I had known nothing of all this !—I, who had come so far but for the delight of beholding her again, had heard the passing bell toll for Emily,—had seen mourning worn for her,—had—But no matter—

From that day,—

—quem semper acerbum
Semper honoratum (sic di voluistis!) habebo,

I became an altered man.

CHAPTER III.

Mon Dieu ! il s'accuse d'avoir été joli garçon, d'avoir eu de charmans cheveux, une jambe fine, le mollet bien placé, le pied petit, et une certaine tournure, dont fut jaloux plus d'un capitaine de dragons. Le drôle !—BROT.

Μισω σοφιστην, ὅστις οὐχ αὐτῷ σοφός.—EURIP.

I HAVE lingered long, much longer than I had intended, on this afflicting chapter of my reminiscences. I ask pardon of my reader. I know not what right any scribbler may have to add a single gloomy shade to the direful dolefuls with which nature has encompassed poor human nature.

Most writers seem to have a predilection for the dismal side of things. Historians are sure to dismiss a golden age in half a dozen

lines ; yet when they come to a bloody war, and a sickly season, to sieges, battles, a drought, a famine, the plague, the cholera,—see how they run on !—What flowing periods !—what high-sounding epithets ! — Decidedly the authoritative classes have a leaning towards the unsunny side of events.

For myself, be it plainly understood, my only motive for alluding to this melancholy episode at all, is to excuse to the world what might otherwise appear an unpardonable act of folly ; —my having volunteered to join the brigade of Beresford ; and having fought through the remaining three years of the Peninsula war, as ferociously as if born the seventh son of a Welsh curate, with an ensigncy in a marching regiment.

I have no ambition to pass for a fighting-man. I do not want to impose myself on the world as a hero. It is necessary, therefore, to explain, not only that I came, saw, and conquered—but why I came at all.—Vain were the remonstrances of my brethren of the *corps*

diplomatique ; vain the indignant letters of Lord Ormington, calling upon me to return instantly to England, on pain of disinheritance. Though on that occasion, and for once, he addressed me with his own hand, I was steadfast in my purpose. I cared nothing for his threats. I cared nothing for my future fortunes. To have confronted London,—cold, heartless London,—London, to whose scandals Emily had laid down the sacrifice of her life,—would have been greater torture to me than condemnation to the gallies.

My object was to die,—speedily,—bravely ; and so escape the guilt of the suicide, or the degradation of insanity. I will not attempt to describe the self-reproaches called forth by the unwitting revelations of my good doctor. When that heavy blow overtook me, I was in no condition to wrestle with affliction. The only wonder is, that I preserved sufficient strength and reason to seek out an honourable career as the termination of my sorrows.

More people, however, expect to die of grief

than fall victims to the poignancy of their sensibility. *I* was not an Emily Barnet. I was only Cecil Danby, the coxcomb!—After a few months' desperate service, after volunteering in every rash attempt,—leading a forlorn hope or two,—and fording a river or so under the enemy's fire,—new desires presented themselves. I still wished to die; but to die the death of the glorious. I hoped that a laurel might wave over my tomb, as a bay-tree over that of Emily. I trusted that, though my days were not to be long in the land, the fame of them might survive me.

The man who cherishes a strong ambition, of whatever nature, is in no immediate danger of dying of a broken heart. At the close of the year, instead of having accomplished my promises to myself or to the memory of the dead, I was alive, strong, vigorous,—a good soldier,—almost a good man!

Not a fellow at Watier's would have owned my acquaintance. All that coat, hat, or boots

could do to disgrace a gentleman, I was undergoing at the hands of mine. Ragged,—patched,—wayworn,—sunburnt,—who would have guessed in me the creature of the cockade,—the fribble of the convolvulus hangings,—the pet of Lady Harriet Vandeleur,—the darling of the Right Hon. Lady Ormington?—

Be pleased, dear public, on arriving at the conclusion of the last paragraph, to conceive me, placing my pen behind my ear and my considering cap on my head, to determine whether or not I shall fight my battles in Spain or Portugal o'er again for your amusement. I am conscious that I could tell you a thing or two you have never heard before. I have got some terrible winter fire-side stories, concerning sackings of convents and burnings of churches, the desecration of my lord abbot's cellar, and my lady abbess's oratorium; but, in my opinion, the pipeclay novelists have taken the shine out of all that sort of thing. Since people took to writing

about the Peninsula campaigns, nobody believes a word one says, when one begins to twaddle about one's conquests. When Gleig opened the trenches with his "Subaltern," indeed, the ground was unbroken and smelt woongly, like all freshly turned earth. But now, it is the disturbed mould of a churchyard.

Besides, when one wants to embroider a little in one's narrative, as heroes and autobiographers are apt to do, one gets so abominably brought to book by those confounded military periodicals,—United Service Journals and Naval and Military Magazines,—that there is no standing it! Were I to attempt a sketch of the storming of St. Sebastian's, for instance, or the hateful business at Bayonne, I should be having platoons of letters fired at me and my publisher, from "Fair Play," or "An old Soldier," for the next six months; and, perhaps, have to fight some fire-eating Irish major at the end of the correspondence.

All things considered, therefore, (and having

come to this determination, I take the pen from behind my ear again,) permit me to parenthesize my years of heroism. I beg you to believe me valiant as Lieutenant-general —, or the God of war, or Tom Thumb, or any other great commander, or knight-commander; and release me from the task of playing commentator on my own Cæsarianisms.

Joking apart, there have been worse soldiers than I was, for a man born without any natural genius for fighting. Recollect that I was enlisted in the cause only by the casual twirling of the wheel of fortune!—At Eton, the regimentals of the Guards, as they amused themselves at cricket in the Windsor Park, had determined my juvenile inclinations towards the army, in its least martial form; and then, the negative of the governor and the governor's lady had sufficed to defeat my intentions. Now, when I had literally enlisted for fighting's sake, without heed of a uniform, or thought of promotion, not even the threat of disinhe-

ritance could turn me from my purpose. There must have been a fate in all this; or I, the slave of Southampton Buildings and drudge of Downing Street, should never have found myself thanked for my services after the action of Toulouse; which, according to competent authorities, had the singular fortune to be gained by the English under Wellington, the French under Soult, and the Portuguese under the Hon. Cecil Danby. But this last little piece of bragging, is an interchange of especial confidence betwixt myself and my readers.

Three years, — three years of peril and privation,—elapsed between my landing at Belem and our triumphal hoisting of the *drapau blanc* in the good city of Bourdeaux. I cared little for the restoration of the Bourbons; —who *did*,—of all those who devoted their blood and breath in the peninsula to that memorable cause?—My feeling was the general feeling of the army,—to put down the French,—to

drive the French back again into their territories,—to bind them down,—to confine their ambition to the country wherein it was their pleasure to decapitate a king and queen one day, as a punishment for the crime of being a king and queen, and create new sovereigns the next, to be dethroned on the third; just as if, after destroying a nest of serpents, one were to thrust the eggs into the sunshine, for the perpetuation of the race.

Nevertheless, in common with some fifty thousand other blockheads, no sooner was the white flag flying, than I chose to fancy we had been fighting solely for the purpose of placing a fat, greedy, infirm old gentleman upon the throne, in place of an active, temperate, and enterprising one; and, satisfied with having laid Napoleon on the shelf at Elba, began to fraternize with the French nation, *en gros et en détail*. During the week spent at Bordeaux, previous to my embarkation for England, I had

swallowed more oysters, perpetrated more conquests among the *grisettes* of the Allée de Tournon, and converted more Napoleons into Breguet watches, dozens of gloves, boxes of eau de Cologne, and *extrait de millefleurs*, than any other numskull in the British army, or its auxiliaries.

La Rochefoucault has had the audacity to say that there are “*peu d’honnêtes femmes qui ne soient lasses de leur métier ;*” a sentence which has caused the prudes of successive centuries to bristle up their quills. I shall, perhaps, provoke a similar porcupinism on the parts of the heroes of my native country, by avowing my belief that few soldiers, in war time, but are equally sick of their calling. It is not danger and death by which they are disgusted, but privation and fatigue ; and, above all, the caprices of those “drest in a little brief authority,” upon whose tempers, harassed by privation and fatigue, depend the minor grievances of the march or the garrison.

I am free to confess that never was I better pleased than on throwing aside the harness of war. My pride had yoked me to its endurance, so long as the bubble reputation floated before the cannon's mouth; but I quite agreed with the allied armies that it was time for those brazen rascals to close their mouths; and, early in the month of May, one of his Majesty's transports landed me at Portsmouth, twenty times more eager for home and its enjoyments, than when released from Eton and all its birch.

How completely the ways and habits of Hanover Square were razed from the tablets of my brain, was sufficiently proved by the fact that I rattled up to the door, in my post-chaise, no whit ashamed either of my plebeian vehicle, my ill-cut coat, my execrable Bourdeaux hat with its voluted brim, or the bronze face it pretended to shade. After three years' absence, I felt privileged to be as uncouth and ill-favoured as I pleased.

Some months had elapsed since I had communicated with home. There was nothing to encourage me to punctual correspondence. My mother's letters, which were short without being sweet, rarely contained more than a bulletin of her own and Bibiche's ailings ; and every now and then, a fresh outburst of reproaches at my having flung aside all consideration for my name and condition, and embarked in a branch of service in which I was never likely to be heard of. She even persisted in addressing her letters to the Honourable Cecil Danby, after I had attained the brevet rank of a field officer.

Other correspondents I had none. The bitterness of misanthropy into which I had fallen, after the painful event which seemed to divide me from social life as completely as though I had taken the vows of a Trappist, left me no inclination to hear more of the London world than was to be gleaned from the news-

papers which occasionally reached us. Nay, it had actually been news to me to read in one of those polite intelligencers, at Bourdeaux, an account of the festivities at Ormington Hall, in honour of the christening of my brother's son and heir. My brother officers jested with me upon what they called my crestfallen face, on discovering that I no longer figured as second in heirship to the title and estates. Yet Heaven knows that no slighter thread could exist, than the tie which united me with any member of the Danby family !—

Nevertheless, on re-approaching the old mansion in Hanover Square, some natural emotions came choking to my throat. I had quitted it so suddenly,—so unadvisedly,—so like a thief in the night, and had since experienced such bitter resentment against its inmates, that I dreaded the moment of our meeting. I almost wished I had written from Bourdeaux, or even Portsmouth, to announce my coming.

But I had been deterred by the apprehension of seeming to bespeak the killing of the fatted calf, in honour of one who formed such slender pretensions to the tenderness of the family.

When the chaise rattled up to the door, a disagreeable presentiment forewarned me that something was amiss. But it was not for *me* to trust to presentiments. Had I not entered the quinta of San José with my heart fluttering with joy,—like a bridegroom—like an enfranchised slave—like all that is most exulting among the children of clay!—

At all events, there was no achievement over the door; no emblazonment intermingling the monsters of heraldry with skulls and cross-bones, to proclaim to the passing mechanic that an ennobled corpse was gone down to the worms. But since my father and mother were still alive, for whom was worn the black array that met my eyes as the hall-door was thrown open?—In whose honour gloomed those sable liveries with their black *aiguillettes*,—a

lugubrious contrast with the well-powdered heads of Lady Ormington's standard footmen.

Neither the butler nor his delegates were known to me by sight ; for Lady Ormington, like most ladies curious in lapdogs, was hard to please in the article of her slaveys. They were always too slow, or too fast ; or they snorted, or snuffled, or were guilty of some other human infirmity. The three fellows who stood staring at my postboy, being unknown to *me*, I was necessarily a stranger to them ; and as there was little to command respect in the discoloured valise and dressing-box strapped to the dickey of that least imposing of all four-wheeled equipages, a yellow chaise having a wooden St. Andrew's cross on its green glass windows, and " licensed to deal in post-horses," on the rail, — I had no reason to be indignant at the air of supercilious amazement with which these well-dressed, well-disciplined varlets surveyed me, when I bad them assist in uncording the luggage.

“ I beg your pardon, sir, — but pray is my Lord expecting you ? ” — inquired the butler, while the two standards gazed at each other for an explanation, — which neither was likely to afford.

“ Be so good as to pay the man, and see the valise taken off, ” — said I, not altogether aware of the perplexities I was exciting.

“ This is Lord Ormington’s, sir, — number eighteen ; — I fancy there is some mistake, ” persisted the butler, bowing back towards the house, and evidently about to close the door in my face.

“ I will thank you to have my luggage carried up to my room, sir, — to Mr. Cecil Danby’s room, — ” said I, by way of explanation.

“ SIR ? — ” ejaculated the man, receding in consternation, as I prepared to jump out, attributing his dismay to remorse for his ungenerous reception of his master’s son returning from the perils and dangers of foreign service.

“ Is Lady Ormington at home ? ” — said I, following him nimbly up the steps.

“Shut the vestibule door, John.—Shut the vestibule door!”—cried the butler in an authoritative tone, when he found himself *tête-à-tête* with me in the hall. “Shut all the doors!”—And instead of replying to my question, he proceeded to whisper in the ear of the said John a message, in which I thought I could distinguish the words Marlborough Street and Bow Street runner.—It was clear that my identity was a matter of suspicion.

“You seem to entertain some hesitation about admitting me?—” said I: “excusable enough; for you are all new since I quitted England. But there must surely be some person left in the household who can identify my person?—”

“Young man,” said the butler, whose mind was running upon his plate-chest, “it is a massiful thing for us all that the family happened to be in town to defeat your nefarious pupposes. I am under the necessity of keeping you in custody till,—”

“Blockhead! —” cried I, out of all patience, “I tell you again that I am Colonel Danby, — Lord Ormington’s younger son!” —

His reply was an insolent laugh, echoed, of course, by his familiars, John and Thomas. He even added something about his eye, which would be no ornament to these pages.

“As we happen to be in mourning, my fine fellow, for the only son as ever my Lord had, with the ’ception of Mr. Danby the membero-parlament, —” John was beginning.

“In mourning—in mourning for *me*? —” cried I, in spite of all my irritation bursting into a laugh. “And where was I killed, pray?—Stay, —as you appear to be more idiotic one than the other, beg Mrs. Ridley, the housekeeper, to walk this way,—or Mademoiselle Aglaé, if still with Lady Ormington.—Even Bibiche would recognize me, and set your minds at ease.”

Something in the decision of my tone, I suppose, convinced them that I was a man having authority; for Mrs. Ridley was instantly sum-

moned, and, albeit, little in the habit of toddling out of her still-room, made her appearance smelling of lemon-peel, cinnamon, and ratafia cakes, as English housekeepers are wont to do when disturbed in the afternoon, during the organization of their second course.

I spare my readers the recapitulation of her ejaculations, varying from horror to wonder,—delight,—ecstasy.—At one time, her joy threatened hysterics; and hysterics from fourteen stone and a half, *avoirdupoise*, is a serious affair. Suffice it, that under the housekeeper's authority and 'a double battery of apologies from the butler and co. I was removed into the dining-room, my valise admitted into the hall, and the postchaise dismissed.

“How ever we *shall* be able to break it to my lady, is more nor I can take it on myself to say!”—sobbed the fat housekeeper. “To be sure, Mr. Cecil, how my lady *did* take on when you was returned missing, and soon a'ter'ards killed!—And now she 'll take on again

every bit as bad, to learn as you be still alive and well! — Bless your soul, sir," she continued, drawing aside her white apron to display her bombazine, "we 've been in mourning for you this month or more; my crape's a-beginning to be a-rusty. I'm sure I don't know who'll dare speak about it to my lady, till Miss Richardson comes in."

"And who the deuce is Miss Richardson?" —cried I.

"Lor', Mr. Cecil, sir, pray have a care, or the men might hear you!—Nothing's done in this house now, without Miss Richardson, sir. Miss Richardson is my lady's companion, sir,—what Ma'mselle Aglae calls her *dam' d'honour*."

Poor Ridley pronounced the word so singularly, that in spite of the solemnity of her bombazine, I laughed outright.

"And when is this '*dam' d'honour*' likely to make her appearance?" said I, "for I am im-

patient to be admitted to your lady, and learn the latest particulars of my decease."

We were interrupted by one of the footmen bursting into the room, with outcries for the housekeeper and *sal-volatile*. The new butler, without much faith, apparently, in her ladyship's sensibility, having walked straight to her dressing-room door and announced the visit of her ladyship's dead son, as coolly as he would have done that of her apothecary.

"Since the mischief's done, sir, maybe you 'd better come up with me at once," said Ridley; and scarcely knowing whether to laugh or cry, I followed her into the presence of my mother. The room smelt powerfully of burnt feathers. *Why* they had been committed to the flames, I can scarcely take on myself to say; for certes I never saw any one further from a fainting fit than Lady Ormington. She reclined in her *fauteuil*, indeed, with her arms pendent over *its* arms; but her two cheeks

were as red as pomegranates, or as Mademoiselle Martin's *végétal superfin*.

“Was there ever anything so shameful as the carelessness of the War Office, my dear Cis!”—cried she, as soon as I had convinced her by an embrace that I was substantial flesh and blood. “Lord Ormington saw the return ‘KILLED,’ with his own eyes, at the Horse Guards!—This is the third instance I have known of a similar blunder.—We have been in black ever since the returns. How glad I shall be to throw it off! The weather is getting very close for bombazine. But, gracious Heaven, Cis! how you are altered!—You are so brown, I might almost say as black as a Spaniard. I hope you mean to shave off those horrible mustachios?—You will drop the dragoon-officer now, I trust!—By the way, do the French women of *ton* wear the chimney-pot bonnets, imported by the Duchess of Oldenburg? I cannot persuade myself that anything so extravagant

is *du bon genre* ; and, after all, the Duchess, though the Emperor's sister, can't be called a criterion of fashion. But you don't ask after poor Bibiche?—”

“ I don't ask after her — because I want no news; her effigy yonder cries ‘ *circumspice!* ’ as loud as the monument of Sir Christopher Wren in St. Paul's. The naturalist has done her justice ! Except at Guildhall, I never saw a finer specimen of stuffing. Only that she looks rather more animated than when alive.”

“ Ah, Cis, you were always shamefully unjust to that poor dog !—It is only two months since she was taken from me !—I assure you I feel her loss sensibly.—There are times when I am obliged to throw a handkerchief over the glass-case. —When Miss Richardson is out of the way, and I am sitting here alone, I often fancy I feel her scratching my gown to be taken up.—Blaine attended her through the winter.—But he said from the first, it was a

lost case !—She was in years, poor little creature ! She would have been thirteen year old, had she survived till Michaelmas.—In fact, she died of old age.—Blaine called it asthma, but it was old age.—They always talked about asthma, when Zaime, her mother, grew infirm. But *I* knew it was old age.—”

It was painful to interrupt these important family communications, with inquiries after Lord Ormington, my brother, and sister.

“ Danby ?—oh, much as usual, I believe. I rather think Lady Susan is going to be confined again. I wrote you word, last year, didn’t I, of the birth of his son ?—They made a wonderful fuss about it, down at Ormington, —roasted oxen, and made bonfires, and all that sort of thing, as if it were the first son-and-heir ever heard of in the world. Lord Ormington took especial delight in marking his triumph. Danby has a house in Connaught Place ; just like him, (isn’t it ?) to go and settle at the extremity of the world !—His

father, however, does not seem to think it far off, for he is there every day of his life. I can tell you, Cis, that if you wish to stand well with Lord Ormington, you must not be wanting in civility to Danby and Lady Susan."

"My dear mother," said I, gravely, "before I quitted England, you were constantly advising deference to Lord Ormington and my brother as a matter of policy rather than of affection. I don't pretend that I ever found my heart overflowing with the family tenderness I have observed in other men. But whatever may have been exacted of me as a boy, as a *man* I will never affect a particle of concession towards either of them, beyond what their conduct claims at my hands. Lord Ormington used to communicate with me through his lawyers; as to my brother, he might have conversed with me through a speaking-trumpet, for any fraternal civilities that garnished his communication. So let it abide; what they have made me, they will find me. Thank Heaven, I have

found friends in my profession, whose regard enables me to dispense with their niggardly kindness."

"We will enter into this another time," said Lady Ormington, somewhat nervously; "but I entreat you, my dear Cis, don't let me hear you talk about 'your profession.' Your profession!—Even if you had gone into the Guards, as you wanted, I should not have liked to hear you talk of the army as a profession;—and—"

"Perhaps not,"—said I, ruthlessly interrupting her; "but, after fighting my way through three years' hard campaigns, and by my own exertions attaining an honourable rank in the service,—"

"The *Portuguese* service!—which always sounds like the marines, or something of that sort—"

"I should recommend no one but your ladyship to disparage it in my hearing," said I, with becoming indignation.

"There!—exactly the dragoon tone and

cut," cried Lady Ormington, whimpering. "It couldn't be worse if you had been spending the last three years in country quarters !—"

Luckily for my patience, Lord Ormington at that moment entered the room ; and I can scarcely do justice to the warmth and deep feeling of his welcome. I had not thought "the old man had so much blood in him;" for there were actual tears upon his cheek as he pressed my hands in his. I suspect the news of my death had produced considerable self-impeachment in the family. More than one of them felt they had visited too harshly upon my head, faults or crimes of which I, at least, was innocent.

Again and again did he recount to me the particulars which had reached Government of my having fallen at Toulouse ; and very readily did I explain in return that, having been taken prisoner, slightly wounded in the hand, the exchange by which I was released, was not

effected at the period of despatching the returns.

“No need to recur to it now, since you are safe and among us again,” cried Lord Ormington, looking kindly at my mother, as if sympathizing in the joy she must experience on the occasion. But Lady Ormington was absorbed in considering what summer dress would be in readiness for her to put on, when she threw off her mourning on the morrow.

I could see that I had gained enormously in Lord Ormington’s estimation by the good reports of my conduct, as a man and an officer, which had reached the Horse Guards, with the announcement of my death. Three years of active service had redeemed me from the personal obloquy under which I had previously laboured; and the bronzed face and shabby coat which so disgusted her ladyship, were in *his* eyes the honourable badges of a noble calling. For my own part, I felt that

no mortal had ever undergone in three years such a transformation for the better as Lord Ormington. I had reason to suppose the opinion reciprocal.

It was not, however, solely to my accession of merit that the change in his feelings was due. I had ceased to be his heir presumptive !—I had ceased to be an object of jealous antipathy to him !—The early marriage of Danby had been of his lordship's devising ; and so gratified was he in the success of his plan, that he seemed almost inclined to include even *me* in his gratitude to Providence for having blessed my brother with increase, in direct heirship to his honours.

It seemed a relief to him, moreover, when, instead of exhibiting envy or soreness, I frankly congratulated him on the birth of the grandson, the fame of whose sponsal rites had reached me in lands beyond the sea.

“ It is a prodigious fine boy ! ”—cried Lord Ormington, with sparkling eyes. “ Croft as-

sures me he never saw a finer !—And Lady Susan expects to be confined again about Midsummer !—”

In this triumphant announcement, I saw only a promise of the duration of my favour. He proposed to me to accompany him to Connaught Place, after dinner ; and was satisfied with my excuses only when I represented that danger might arise to Lady Susan Danby from too sudden a presentation of the brother-in-law, for whom she was in mourning. Meanwhile, not a word of Hanmer and Snatch,—not a sarcasm,—not a covert sneer !—Lord Ormington was as companionable with me after dinner, as though we had done nothing but doat upon each other from the hour I was born !—

It is true, we soldiers were just then top sawyers in the world. We had so much to relate which, though now a hundred and thrice told tale, was then new and startling. All we had seen and suffered, still wore its gloss of novelty. There was something in our un-

couth raiment, and weather-worn visages, that attested our vauntings. The very same anecdotes related by the soft silken Cis Danby of the F. O. three years before, would not have assumed half the authenticity.

Lady Ormington was doubly enchanted when she found that the sympathy testified towards me by her Lord, was but a faint fore-showing of the fever of fashion I excited among the coteries of the season. I was the lion of the day;—that is, the lion of private life, as the Emperor and Kings, of public. After Blucher and Platoff, in fashionable favour, came the Cecil Danby who had risen from the dead. The story of my return, with variations *ad libitum*, was related throughout all the coteries royal, noble, and ignoble of the Metropolis; how the butler swooned and my lady shrieked,—how Lord Ormington was forced to alter his will, and the ‘*dam’ d’honour*’ to change her apartment.—

The ‘*dam’ d’honour*,’ the Toady Richardson

aforesaid, was, I believe, the only person who thought I might have been just as well lying in the sands of Toulouse, as in the blue convolvulus bed. No longer blue convolvulus, however. Profaned by the investiture of Toadyism, I represented to my lady-mother the necessity of complete renovation; and had now the honour of sleeping in hangings of sea-green damask, precisely the pattern of those which, the following year, Bullock sent out to Longwood for the use of a still greater hero than myself.

“ I must really have you sit to Lawrence, Cis, before your guerrilla look is quite worn off!—” cried Lady Ormington; “ or Phillips ! I should like Phillips to paint you in the style in which he painted Byron, in his Arnaout dress. You would make a beautiful brigand ! Lady Susan assures me you were more run after at White’s ball, the other night, than any of the Duke of Wellington’s aide-de-camps.”

“ I was not aware of being hunted,” said

I, relapsing into one of my ineffable smiles of former days. “Certainly the *Pékins* have just now a sorry time of it. The hero fever is raging. We poor soldiers must make our hay while the sun shines.”

I appeal to those readers of my own sex who are able to call to mind the epoch in question, (for to call upon readers of the fairer, to remember the events of seven-and-twenty years ago, were to add insult to injury,) whether the shabbiest and most rusty pair of mustachios might not have taken the field against ten thousand a-year?—My brother had every reason to exclaim as Sir Walter Scott did to Moore—“Ah! Tam, mon!—it’s lucky for us we came sae soon!”—The political distinctions which had made a demigod of *him*, three years before, would not have stood their ground against a cornetcy of Cossacks.

It is true, the Emperor and King, or as the mob familiarly abbreviated them, “Proushia and Roushia,” had inquired for him by

name, as one of the most distinguished speakers of the House. But what was the curiosity of an emperor, compared with the idolatry of Almack's lavished upon one whom the lovely creatures protested had been the first in the breach at St. Sebastian's, and was not only killed, but buried, at Bayonne! Women seldom trouble themselves to be *very* accurate in such matters.—But who would not rather be blundered about by the enthusiasm of a hundred handsome women, than figure legitimately in the pages of Napier's History, or Gurwood's Bulletins?—

What a moment it was!—Stars and garters, what a moment it was!—What an outbreak of public feeling celebrated the cessation of the European panic, the great blessing of peace; peace that was to re-consolidate broken fortunes, suppress taxes, and heal the wounds of so many bleeding families; peace that was to efface if possible from the records of God, the damning fact that the progress of forty cen-

turies of civilization and eighteen of Christianity, had done no more towards humanizing mankind, than comported with murders by thousands and tens of thousands, sanctioned under the name of WAR!—

I was young then, and under the dominion of the enthusiasm of the moment. But on looking back dispassionately to my three years' apprenticeship in the art of heroism, I shudder at the idea of the ferocious enormities in which I acted my part. It puzzles me to guess whether the tears of good angels, or the mirth of bad ones must exceed, while watching the progress of this wholesale butchery,—this crime with a premium,—arising from disputes whether such and such districts of the earth shall pay taxes to such or such a sovereign!—At all events, from the said sovereigns down to a poor colonel of auxiliaries, like myself, all the world united to welcome the piping times of peace; and the coteries of London, so long given over to the twaddling of Lords and school-boys,

knelt down to kiss the print in the dust of a pair of jackboots.

WELLINGTON,—Wellington whom they have since hissed and pelted,—was at that moment a divinity!—St. Paul might have preached in Hyde Park, and not attracted a greater congregation, than crushed itself to death at the heels of a conqueror, what Thiers describes Napoleon, — “*la plus grande gloire depuis César!*” — He might have overthrown the reigning dynasty, as easily as a child blows down a pack of cards. I am not sure that this last phrase may not be high treason,—or constructive treason,—or treason of some shape or colour.—But pardon me, O Lord Chief Justice and bench of Judges!—I am only giving utterance to the opinions of a Coxcomb.—

Not that the people had reason to complain of their Lords and Governors. The afflicted King was as though numbered with the dead: and as to little Benjamin their ruler, the Regent, who, to beguile The Times, looked like the time,—

of all modern princes he was the man to play the host to the exotic royalties to whom we were affording kingdom-room : graceful, — gracious, — a proficient in foreign languages, and super-skilled in the superficial arts of life.

It is true the shapely waist of “Roushia,” and the rough manliness of “Proushia,” formed a disadvantageous contrast to the unvioldiness of a prince who had not been dieting on soup made of his own boots ; nor was the effigy of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent the one most calculated to win a lady’s eye, of all those limned by Lawrence for the edification of posterity. As my friend Byron said one night at Watier’s,——but no !——had he intended the *mot* for publication, he would have printed it himself.

For my part, it was neither Roushia nor Proushia,—Lawrence nor Byron,—the Regent nor Mr. Wilberforce,—who arrested my attention. Reflect, indulgent reader, that for three years past, my eyes had beheld nothing fairer,

in the shape of the grand-daughters of Eve, than the suttlers of a camp, or the coffee-coloured beauties of the Peninsula. I never could abide the complexion of Spaniards or old point. I like a woman's cheek to be as the rose, before black roses were invented by modern science. I do not care to see the idol of my soul blush walnut-colour. To me, the transparent beauty of those English faces was something angelic ! Like the Teutons, I could make no distinction between *Englisch* and *Engelisch* !—I am not sure, by the way, that English women were ever before seen to such advantage, and I doubt whether they ever will again ; for they were *themselves*. No French *modistes* or *coëffeurs*, no torturer in stays, shoes, or curling-irons, were established in unsophisticated London. Their curls, shapes, complexions, were their own. They talked English, and they looked English. A French woman is sweet as the sweetbrier, and nearly as *piquante*. But an English woman who af-

fects the French woman, is like the donkey in the fable, leaping spanielwise into his master's lap.

Never do our countrywomen blunder more heinously than in renouncing that nationality which, in 1814, caused the Allied Sovereigns to assign them the palm over all that the banks of the Seine had developed for their captivity. It is true their Majesties regarded, just then, those self-sufficient divinities with the scorn of captors,—the scorn which prompted Bonaparte in the rampancy of success, to deter the painter David from the completion of his picture of Timoléon, by saying that “*après tout, qu'est ce que les Spartiates ?—Des vaincus !*”—

I would give—all that is left me in this world—my credit in St. James's Street—(I do not mean at Sams's or Crocky's, but as a man about town,) to live over again a day or two of that glorious month of June, 1814!—to be smiled upon again, as I was then; to go through those fêtes of White's, Watier's, and

Carlton House, with the same partners, — mothers, or in some instances, grandmothers, of the poor vapid things I now see whisking round the rooms at Willis's, mere shadows of the brilliant beings who wreathed the laurels of Wellington and Alexander, the first to dash through the fiery-footed *étourderie* of the *valse à la Russe* !—

Ah! m'è che memorie !—

NON RAGIONAM DI LOR, MA GUARDA E PASSA !

CHAPTER IV.

Plus que personne, j'admire l'intrépidité qui rend indifférent aux plus épouvantables dangers. Mais il y a terme à tout !

EUGÈNE SUE.

At five-and-twenty, when the better part of life is over, one should be something. And what am I ? Nothing but five-and-twenty, AND the odd months.

BYRON.

BREAKING up for the holidays is a pleasant thing, whether to soldiers or school-boys. But after sickening themselves with plum-cake, comes the re-action. Homer and birch cannot be laid aside for ever.

The first thing Peace had leisure to discover was that War must be paid for ; and

long before the triumphal arches of laurels had been cleared away, or the stages for fire-works removed from the Parks, the nation began to cry aloud that it was about to appear in Basinghall Street; that it was all up with Great Britain!—After pretending to give the law to the universe, she was all but amenable to the Poor Law, and strongly advised to take the benefit of the act.—Tell it not in Gath!—or, at all events, tell it not in Gaul:—but so it was!—

After the rumblings and grumblings of the Metropolis, how charming appeared to me the verdant tranquillity of dear old dull Ormington Hall!—Instead of imploring my mother to defer her departure till September, I was as glad to go in August as if its grassy uplands had been scrubby moors, and its partridges, grouse. The rookery disturbed me no longer. I began to feel that the place was home; that its plantations and turnip-fields were not as other plantations and turnip-fields. I had not

yet forgotten how often among the scorching plains and unsightly maize fields of the Peninsula, I had longed to flee away, and be at rest under the shade of my ancestral oaks.

Lord Ormington was pleased with the frankness of these admissions. He was beginning to treat me, if not as a son, as an agreeable acquaintance. Since my resuscitation was an inevitable evil, the whole family seemed resolved to make the best of me. By tacit consent, not one of us ever adverted to any event antecedent to my precipitate expedition to Lisbon; my mother having admitted that it was in consequence of the remonstrances of Lord Ormington, grounded upon those of Danby and the intelligence of Lady Harriet, that old Hanmer had entrusted to other hands the care of his illstarred Portuguese ward. But she disavowed all knowledge of the harshness of his conduct: and was indignant against him when I assured her that the flight of the d'Acunhas from England originated in the ter-

rors with which they were beset by the cunning old lawyer.

That the broken heart of Emily was attributable to a similar source, viz. the picture of my follies and vices and levity towards herself, skilfully touched by the solicitor in Southampton Buildings, proved Messrs. Hanmer and Snatch to be my bitter enemies. Lord Ormington, however, made no further allusion to their name. My allowance was paid through his bankers, and his pleasure signified by himself.

I fancied—it was probably only fancy,—that, after the birth of Lady Susan Danby's second child,—*a girl*,—he grew a little less cordial. But I had no reason to complain.

If reserved with me, he was mysterious with all the world; and we got on a wonderful deal better together, now that I knew a bean from a pea field, and mangel wurzel from Swedes, and condescended to potter with him in his rides and walks.

The house was full of company for the

shooting season. Battues were not yet in fashion ; but the Ormington preserves had lost nothing during my absence. All this was better fun than among the guerillas. I scarcely understood the philosophy of Danby, who had declined my father's proposition to give up the family place to him on his marriage. But the peculiar distinction of my brother's character was moderation,—the highest quality, perhaps, of the philosophy of civilization. Sabine farms are thoroughly out of fashion. The first incentive to distinction, in modern times, is prodigality ; and we have seen not only the richest inheritors gallop through their fortunes into beggary, but the greatest men, who by high faculties have achieved riches and honour, condemn themselves to years of misery, by an attempt to rival the brilliant existence of people richer and sillier than themselves.

I was not then able to appreciate the profound wisdom of Danby's modest establishment. It requires a great mind to enter into the great-

ness of moderation. All the mediocrities of public life, for instance, admitted themselves disappointed in the honourable member for Rigmare. Since his splendid outburst, he had not made a single speech deserving the honours of the press. He was little cited for eloquence,—those who had raved about him as an orator having given him up for showier debutants. It was only the practical men, like Votefilch, who saw in him the unboasting Hercules whose shoulder was ever to the wheel of the party,—whose prognostications had been oracularly fulfilled,—and whose greatest greatness of all, was the modest good sense with which he contented himself with a subordinate place in the eyes of the public.—For if the power of acquiring be a great thing, the power of abstaining from acquirement is a thousand times greater.

I never saw two happier people than Danby and Lady Susan ; domestic, without nauseating others by a display of their domesticity, and wholly

free from that impertinent egotism, *à deux coups*, which passes for a virtue among the exceedingly selfish, rigidly righteous, of Great Britain. They neither withdrew from society, to be made more of by each other than society was likely to make of them ; nor, in society, affected to see and feel for themselves. It was impossible to bear their faculties more meekly, or to fulfil their parts more discreetly on the great stage of the world.

Another, and scarcely less sober couple in our family circle, were Mr. and Mrs. Halbert Herries, or, as the newspapers would say, — “Halbert and the Hon. Mrs. Herries” — Julia having been many months the wife of my former colleague. But my former colleague was now under secretary of state ; and his bride, in addition to her hereditary ten thousand pounds, had inherited forty from her maiden aunts. The match was consequently a prudential one on both sides ; and Herries, originally as grave as a judge, was now as grave as a lord chan-

cellor.—I am not so sure, by the way, that the illustration is a happy one ; the chancellors *I* have seen on the woolsack,—including Erskine, Eldon, Lyndhurst, Brougham,—having been renowned for runaway marriages and convivial propensities, rather than for the solemnity of their deportment.

My mother could not bear the marriage. She had written word of it to me in Spain, as a job of Lord Votevilch's ; and was constantly lamenting that her daughter had not married Lord Riddlesworth, a Catholic Irish peer ; or Colonel Morley, who, on finding Lady Harriet Vandeleur's jointure forfeitable by a second marriage, had looked upon Julia's ready money as a readier payment for his debts. Even now, though she saw Mrs. Herries perfectly happy, and occupying a highly honourable position in life, she was always protesting against the precariousness of official distinctions, and the odiousness of office-men.

Her *taquinerie* appeared to fall innocuous

on the happy couple. They were like people living secure in a thunder-storm, under shelter of a conductor. They were content! So far as Herries was concerned, the boy had proved so genuinely father to the man, that is, the clerk to the secretary, that I very much doubt whether he were so much as cognizant of any event occurring beyond the pale of the official circle radiating from the centre in Downing Street. Herries always looked puzzled when accosted by Lord Ormington with domestic or country news; as if he longed to say, "I beg your pardon,—that belongs to the Home Department!—"

As for my sister, my red-haired sister, poor condemned Julia, I scarcely venture to speak of her, lest in making the *amende honorable*, I seem to fall into the contrary extreme of partiality. La Bruyère has said, "*si une laide se fait aimer, ce ne peut être qu'éperdument*," since it is a passion that must arise from the weakness of her lover, or some inherent

quality superior to beauty. Mrs. Herries possessed a plurality of qualities superior to beauty. She was both *aimable* and amiable ;—both estimable and excellent, — that is, both loveable and excellent ; for there was something in the charm of her manner and intonation of her voice, combined with the alabaster-lamp-like transparency of her countenance, which most men found irresistible. Wherever she went, the place by her side was eagerly appropriated: No one talked more agreeably ; no one possessed such general information, or said her say in so pleasant and unpretending a manner.

We had not spent a week together at Ormington, before I began to repent me of my former injustice. Grateful for the gentle cordiality with which, as Herries's wife, she accepted as a friend the man who, as Julia Danby, had rejected her as a sister, I repaid her generosity with the gift of my whole confidence. Julia was the only member of my family to whom I ever named the name of Emily ;

and never shall I forget my thankfulness when the tears of my neglected sister flowed in sincere sympathy at the recital of my troubles.

Of all confidantes, give me a woman !—For warmth of sympathy,—for active aid,—for good faith,—for trustworthiness,—I say again, give me a woman !—Man (who in the fable painted the subjugation of the lion,) has chosen to paint, both in fable and history, the inconsistency of womankind,—its infirmity of purpose,—its incontinence of tongue. Away with fabulists and historians !—Rather a thousand times confide a secret to a woman, than to a gabbler of one's own sex ; whose jealousies and envyings are gaping to devour one ; and who, instead of being a noun substantive, is, after all, only an item of his clubs and his freemason's lodge. A woman is *herself*,—that is, kind, generous, and true. I swear I would as soon run my head against an iceberg, as entrust my sorrows to one of my own cold, double-breasted, double-milled sex.

Of my former friends, or associates, some had achieved greatness, and some had greatness thrust upon them. Chippenham had achieved it by a natural progress, on the decease of his father, to the Upper House; and having of course inherited with his peer's robes the graces and faculties of estate, he was now an ambassador, with her Excellency Lady Theresa for his Countess. The Earl and Countess of Merepark throned it majestically at —; and his lordship was described in leading articles as an able and conscientious man. How far his union with Lady Votefilch's niece might conduce to open the eyes of Government to his very sudden accession of abilities, it becomes me not to determine.

Among those on whom greatness had been thrust, I conclude I may enumerate Sir John Harris, K. all sorts of things, not omitting the Guelphic, and Honorary all sorts of things at Carlton House and in the Red Book. It would be difficult exactly to define his functions. He

was supposed to invent wigs and collect Chinese lanterns,—give designs for yacht cabins, and cottage chimneys.—But it was all supposition. His exits and entrances were noted, but nothing wherefore. He was tabooed, and had ceased to converse with the public at large; occasionally letting fall something exceedingly piquant to an Earl or a cabinet minister, which was picked up and arduously repeated at the clubs. For every one was overjoyed to quote Sir John Harris! Even *I* should no more have dared to “Jack” him, now, than to “George” His Royal Highness the Prince Regent!—

Many origins were assigned to this mysterious favouritism; competition for a crack teapot at Baldock’s, in which Sir John had ceded the *pas* with a grace and solemnity which made it a *pas grave*;—an inedited recipe for curaçoa punch, à *crème de thé*;—a pattern for a gored stock, which was said to impart to the most apoplectic throat the lengthened stiffness “long

drawn out" of a stork. It was no manner of consequence. Sir John was born in a cork jacket, predestined to float, like other weeds, on the surface of the stream ; or, rather, he was one of those of whom it has been said, "fling him with a stone round his neck into a horse-pond, and he will rise in ten minutes out of the water, in a court suit, bag-wig, and sword."

The first time I paid my respects at Carlton House after my arrival, I had determined to take the initiative in cutting so great a man. But sweet Sir John knew better than to afford me a pretext for prating of his early whereabouts ; and held out his finger with almost as much condescension as if *he* had been Emperor of the Celestial Empire, and I, a mandarin of the third button. I took him as I found him. It was not for Cis Danby to quarrel with the pretensions of a coxcomb ; and as I have always considered success the test of merit, as Napoleon did of his Spartans, I was bound

to consider Sir John Harris, K.A. K.B. K.C. K.D. K.E. K.F. K.G. and so forth through the alphabet, the Admirable Crichton of modern chivalry.

There was really some excuse for the beknighting, just then, of so many very simple citizens. The deluge of foreign titles which had swept over the surface of our society, had created such a craving appetite for titularity, that (as Napoleon observed of one of his sisters, who sulked with him for withholding from her the dignities of queen, “Would not any one suppose I had defrauded her of her share of the realms of the king our father?”) the Prince might have observed of certain animalculæ crawling about the court, who insisted upon the honours of knighthood,—“Would not any one suppose that all the doctors and apothecaries in my dominions were born in spurs!—” There was even one clerical knight,—a crooked scion of a noble house—who always reminded me of Sir Hugh in the “Merry Wives.”

As to myself, I had to run away almost on my knees, like the Mayor of Newcastle from George the Third, from the be-Guelphing sword of the Regent. I gave out in the coterie of Carlton House, by way of buckler to my unoffending innocence, that I should be disinherited by Lord Ormington, were I to assume any other designation than that conferred by my birthright; and secured under lock and key the insignia of the order of the Tower and Sword, as though it had been the badge of a hackney-coachman.

This scrupulosity may now appear overcharged; but I appeal to all who visited Paris or London in the year of grace, 1814, whether a ribbon in the button-hole were not then the nearest degradation to the letters T. F. (*Travaux Forcés*) inscribed on the shoulder of a *galérien*?—

What was *I*, above all, to attain by being Guelphed?—My hereditary distinctions placed me in the category of gentlemen, and my professional ones had certainly done nothing to

place me in that of heroes. I had fought my way bravely ; but so had thousands and thousands of others who put in no claim to the glories of the spur. Soldiership had done more for me than fifty knighthoods, by softening the influence of a profound affliction, and hardening the effeminacy of inveterate foppery. I had now attained to as much philosophy as was compatible with my four-and-twenty years, and a monstrous good-looking face withal ; and Byron, with whom at Watier's and elsewhere I had picked up an acquaintanceship almost amounting to friendship, often expressed his envy of my unaffected apathy, as the genuine *dolce far niente* of the heart.

We heard the chimes at midnight together ; and he saw me stand fire without flinching. That was a strange epoch in the history of the female society of Great Britain ! The knight who suddenly flings aside his armour, is more defenceless than the simple clown, habitually *in cuerpo* ; and the Englishwomen,

who, during the visit of the Allied Sovereigns, laid aside their prudery to make a virtue of hero-hunting, certainly went lengths in the excitement of the hour, which it would be difficult to match in the *histoire galante* of less highly reputed countries. Had Byron lived to complete Don Juan, he would have put anecdotes on record, in some of which I was an actor ; in some, himself,—such as might have made the tales of the Queen of Navarre either blush or turn pale with envy.

This it was that rendered Ormington Hall such a relief to me ! Those frantic three months in London, with their orgies, including all that was ruinous to health or fortune, had so thoroughly disgusted me, that I was too happy in sauntering with Lord Ormington over his farms ; still happier when chatting by the fire-side of Danby and Lady Susan, at Forest Lodge, a pretty place they had hired on the Bracknell side of Windsor Forest.

They saw little or no company ; for my

brother was as studious and almost as silent as ever. But when he *did* converse, people held their breath to listen. Like the flowering of the aloe or the gestation of the lion, the product was proportionate to the delay.

I suppose it was on account of Danby's taciturnity and Lady Susan's extreme gentleness, that their boy, now nearly two years old, took so decided a fancy for his soldier-uncle.

I dissuaded him from crawling on the carpet, by instituting a school of discipline; and with my cane and word of command got him through his exercise; till Lord Ormington, albeit little addicted to mirth, used to burst into fits of laughing at his martial airs.

Lady Susan was engrossed by her girl; — Danby in compiling an edition of the works of Bolingbroke. Little Arthur consequently fell to my share as a companion. While enjoying the last gleams of autumnal sunshine under the magnificent beech-trees overshadowing the lawn,

originally a part of the royal forest, Lord Ormington and I seemed to enjoy ourselves more in that little domestic snuggerly, than at his own princely domain. For *him*, I suspect, there were disagreeable reminiscences attached to the old hall ; for myself, I do not scruple to own that the growing friendship of Danby was the great embellishment of my existence.

Yes !—I, Cis Danby of the cockade, was actually proud of him, both as a brother and as an Englishman ;—proud of frightful John ;—proud of the urchin exiled to the nursery, that I might play the peacock unmolested. Through him, I seemed to feel as if the Danby family were grappled not only to the passing time but to future ages ; and though celebrity has been defined by a clever French writer as “ *le tout petit avantage d’être connu de ceux qui ne nous connaissent point,*” it is an advantage which greater men than myself are far from despising.

I had commenced life by a false step. At the instigation of a passionate impulse, I had

abandoned a promising vocation ; and though the military career thus wildly embraced had spared me life and limb for new adventures, I never yet saw an existence prosper, which commenced with a blunder. Sailors have a superstition against voyages that begin with putting back. I confess I share the prejudice.

Lord Ormington probably discerned, after I had been some six months resident in England, that I was giving myself up to listlessness ; like a man whose destinies are accomplished, when in fact, at my age, mine could scarcely be considered begun ; for he took occasion one day gravely to inquire whether it were true that I had declined an appointment in the household of the Regent.

“To the letter !—” replied I. “Sir John Harris was commissioned to offer it to me, a few weeks after my appearance at the levee. But though gratified to find myself still honoured by his Royal Highness’s notice, I refused the favour designed me.”

“You did very wrong,” replied Lord Ormington drily. “You must be aware, Cecil, that the peculiar circumstance under which you threw over your appointment at Lisbon, have closed the doors of diplomatic distinction against you?”

“Not more closely than I desire!” was my reply. “I have no yearning after the petty mysteries of the despatch-box!”

“May I ask, then,” resumed Lord Ormington, “what are your projects?—It is right to apprise you, Cecil, that though your conduct and character for the last three years command my regard and respect, in a degree I had little anticipated, it will never be in my power to do more for you than I am now doing. By your mother’s marriage settlement, you are entitled to ten thousand pounds. I have no intention of increasing the provision.”

“Why should you, when it fulfils my utmost ambition?—” said I, coolly. “Had I remained an idler about town (for, after all, my shallow

duties as supernumerary-sub in Downing Street, were a mere pretext for idling about town,) there is every probability that in process of time, the increase of my bills at Thevenot's, and Dyde and Scribe's, would have necessitated an appeal to parliament for the discharge of my debts. Campaigning luckily took me out of the hands of the Philistines and the perfumers; and I have now come to consider four hundred a-year a fortune for a prince of the blood."

Lord Ormington looked vexed. Perhaps he descried in my manifesto, incipient symptoms of a relapse into coxcombry.

"I must still presume to suggest," said he, "that you would do well not to trifle with the good-will of the Regent. You are in a situation to require the support of your friends."

"A situation?—" cried I, somewhat surprised, and fearing he was about to enter into certain long-dreaded explanations.

"In a situation *as a younger son*," calmly

resumed his lordship. "You want occupation, Cecil; you want a destination for your young energies. There is good in you, if you would only turn it to good account!"

This was a great deal for Lord Ormington. I remember the time, in his days of mystery, when, previous to uttering so long a sentence to any one, (to me he uttered only monosyllables), he would have barred the door, and placed sentinels outside. I contented myself with inquiring what "good" he thought would result from my holding a place about the person of the Regent?—

"Are you serious,—or is this a return to your old habits of irony?—" demanded Lord Ormington. "Is it nothing to be reckoned among the friends of the Heir-apparent to the throne?—"

"In my opinion, less than nothing!—" I replied.

'Fortuna vitrea est : tum, quum splendet, frangitur.'

"*Who* wishes to be caught up and whirled

round by the sails of a windmill? When I quitted England, I left the Prince of Wales surrounded by all that is ultra among the liberals in politics,—his very terrier barking Whiggery. I find the Prince Regent surrounded by all that is narrowest in Toryism,—his very cockatoo screaming ‘Huzza for Castle-reagh!’—”

“His Royal Highness has wisely conceded to the spirit of the times,” replied Lord Ormington, gravely. “The fable of Dame Partington and her mop is applicable to both sides of the question. You could scarcely expect the sovereign *pro tempore* of these realms—”

“I expect nothing,—either *of* or *from* him!” was my somewhat cavalier interruption. But from that day, I perceived that his lordship lost no opportunity of impressing upon me the ignominious obscurity of being a *cadet de famille*, unless the position were upheld by talents or industry. I was quite of his opinion. But ignominious obscurity, *id est*, inglorious ease,

was now my idol. For the life and soul of me, I could not reunite the shattered links of the chain of ambition !

It was the era of great achievements. Laurels were as plentiful as hawthorn hedges ; and the trumpet of Fame was almost as familiar as the horn of a mail coach. As Byron used to say, the only distinction was to be a little undistinguished. Napoleon, if he had an antechamber of kings, had also created a mob of heroes : and under such circumstances to raise oneself above the crowd was an Herculean task. I felt that I had not energy for the enterprize. I resolved, therefore, to content myself with my modest peninsular renown, till it should be worn threadbare ; then, trust to the chapter of accidents for its renovation. I tried to pass off my indolence under the plausible name of content ; looked wondrous wise, and talked wondrous prosy ; and in England, (as regards philosophy or morality,) *l'habit fait le moine*.

That winter, all the world—more especially that foolish portion of it which calls itself the fine world—was hurrying to Paris. Among others, my mother took it into her head to experience an eager longing for a glimpse of the Louvre. She had not visited Paris since, shortly after the assembling of the States General, I saw the light there, in the Château de Boulaivilliers at Passy, belonging to her fair and unfortunate friend the Princesse de Lamballe.

“They tell me all is as we left it;—that her cypher remains unchanged in the medallions, and that our names are still visible carved on the bark of one of the old trees in the orangerie,” said Lady Ormington, coaxing herself into a fit of the sentimentals; though in fact she was only obeying the impulsion of Toady Richardson, who wanted to get away from my father’s legislation. “I shall never rest till I have ascertained which of my friends escaped the guillotine, and whether any of them are still living.”

To my great surprise, Lord Ormington opposed no obstacle to the project. But having no illustrious friends in the Faubourg St. Germain, to incur or escape the horrors of beheading, he saw no necessity for including himself in the party. As Sir Lionel Dashwood had been her ladyship's cavalier on the former occasion, he seemed to consider it a matter of course that *I* should be so on the present.

He did not even put it to me in a hypothetical form, whether I should accompany Lady Ormington ; but gave me succinct instructions concerning the mode in which I was to draw upon his bankers in her behalf. His liberality was excessive ; but I suspect he would have given double the money for the satisfaction of getting rid of us, to divide his time exclusively between Julia and John.—As he pleased !—I gave him ample credit for the two thousand pounds he placed to ours at Drummond's, and departed.

Let it be taken for granted that we arrived

safe at Paris. My readers have, I trust, done justice to my forbearance in the daubery or description line. If not, I give them notice that my palette was got up with an assortment of the finest oil-colours from Newman's, expressly to inflict a sketch of the Convention upon them, enlivened with the proper varieties of national costume and British or foreign uniforms, and the particoloured brilliancy of the Lisbon quays, crowned by a sunny sketch of high mass in the cathedral.

It depended upon myself to develop all this in a couple of dozen pages of historiography, emblazoned like a missal with scarlet, cobalt, and gold, fine enough for the gorgeous pages of the most fashionable annual going. But I forbore. I reflected that the florid was going out of fashion. Scarcely a scribbler who wields a crow-quill but has got up a bit of fine writing of this description, for the use of boudoirs and the delight of the tallow-chandlers' wives.

For the same reason, I now refrain from em-

bellishing my life and times with a lively picture of Paris emerging from the iron pressure of the tyranny of Napoleon, which may be found in better English in the pages of Scott's "Visit," or "Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk," besides being married to immortal verse in the inimitable Correspondence of "The Fudge Family."

It matters little that all which these or other English authorities saw or desired to see of Paris is comprized within the Boulevards and the Palais Royal. They and the public were satisfied,—and so am I!—

As to Lady Ormington, whom I escorted to the banks of the Seine, with the conviction that her elegant valetudinarianism would resign itself as quietly to a *bergère* in the *Hôtel de Breteuil*, as to an easy-chair in Hanover Square, I was literally awed on detecting the influence of the genius of the place, the moment she found herself once more within view of the Tuileries. She seemed to recede the whole

twenty-four years of my existence, and become one-and-twenty again, and a beauty !—

No sooner installed in that temple of frippery, than she cried aloud, like the Pythoness, “ The god !—the god ! ”—inspired by the afflatus of the tripod. Poor Toady Richardson wore herself to a cambric thread with rendering the hourly tribute of flattery exacted by her patroness, upon the rejuvenization of her appearance, under the hands of Le Roi and Victorine, Plaisir and Minette. I scarcely knew where this second childhood of coquetry would stop. For though her ladyship had attained her forty-sixth year, old women, from Cardinal —— downwards, were at a premium at the court of the corpulent sovereign whose brightest reminiscences had of course attained their majority.

To us, by the way, his rotund Majesty was singularly gracious, affording us what was in his eyes the highest mark of distinction,—excellent dinners.—Worthy soul ! — I beg his

Majesty's pardon—worthy body !—a course of twenty years' roast mutton and batter pudding had developed his royal sensibilities towards the true enjoyments of life.—Prolonged divorce from the glorious *casseroles* of Paris, had taught him the eminent superiority of the *almanach des gourmands* over the Almanack of Saxe Gotha ; and while hundreds of antediluvian princesses and ci-devant duchesses were quarrelling for tabourets, and trying to restore at the château the Holy Inquisition of ancient Bourbon etiquette, his Majesty ate, drank, and said grace after meat ; conceiving that, in a world full of marrow and fatness, where Providence assigns ortolans and *pâtés de foie gras* for the food of man—or kings—there can be no pretext for fretting after idle distinctions of precedence and estate. I love a straight-forward epicurean, who makes no compromise with his pleasant vices ; nor disfigures with a sneer the unctuous lips, imbibing to satiety the good things of this world.

I was surprised by the way, considering the enormous ravages of the guillotine, and the number of unfortunate nobles of the *ancien régime* said to have died in emigration in England, not of starvation, but of bad cookery, to find the Faubourg St. Germain flourishing in all its pristine stiffneckedness. It did not appear to me that its hotels could have contained more dowagers or bishops, had Robespierre never encumbered or disencumbered the earth; and though we heard of the extinction of ancient families effected during the Reign of Terror, I did not seem to miss a single title "damned to everlasting fame" by the records of the gallant reign of Louis XV.

Among these, Lady Ormington was an idol. They had worn her all those twenty years in their heart of hearts; and the old Cosway print, deepened in its tints by a quarter of a century's smoke and dust, was still extant in more than one hotel of the Rue de Grenelle.

On visiting those old hotels, *par parenthèse*, I could well understand how the tale of the *Belle aux bois dormante* had found its origin in the noble Faubourg ; for certain of the two-and-thirty quarterings generations seemed to rise at the restoration of the Bourbons, from a sleep of a century's duration, cobwebbed like a bottle of old hock out of the cellar of an abbot. I am by no means sure that, in the attics of some of these antiquated mansions, an old woman might not have been found still twirling her antediluvian spindle. The Faubourg was a museum of fossils.

It was a great delight to these classical authorities to turn the tables upon the *parvenu* duchesses and countesses hatched under the wing of the Empire, in Madame Campan's *colombier* at Ecouen. The bitterness of contempt engendered by the honours they had been forced to concede to these pretty creatures of yesterday, is scarcely to be imagined ; more especially when engrafted upon houses *de*

pur sang, by a peremptory marriage. Hundreds of romances, besides that of Madame Gay, might be concocted out of the *Mariages sous l'Empire*, which I found bearing fruit about as palatable as “the apples on the Dead Sea shore—all ashes to the taste.”—

By such as these, the Allies were welcomed as friends, and the English as Allies. The moral of the case was nothing to *me*. I was content to be *choyé* and *caliné* in those charming boudoirs ; to be told twenty times a day, that any one might have guessed from my appearance the secret of my birth ; that I deserved to be *né Parisien*. I made the most of that happy accident. Like the bat, I was a bird with the bipeds, and a mouse with the quadrupeds ; and, after being adored as a John Bull all the spring in London, was *l'enfant chéri des dames* in Paris, whenever *les dames* chose me to be *chéri*.

My former affectations were budding anew. Like a tree that has been cut down instead of

grubbed up, the old root sent forth a plenteous growth of underwood. The coterie at the Tuileries was maudlin with enervation. Everything vigorous or manly seemed to have retreated from public life; and the recent vicissitudes of royalty inspired such a dread of the instability of human enjoyments, that "*dum vivimus, vivamus*" was the motto of many wise men besides the pious Dr. Doddridge.

I will not pretend to exculpate myself from the epicureanism of the hour. No one enjoyed more exquisitely the dinners of Bouvilliers,—the gleanings of Corcellet's stores,—the *Feen Welt* of the ballet,—the pleasantries of the Opéra Comique,—and so on to the end of the catalogue of Parisian enjoyments. Above all, I was enchanted with the French women!—I do not blush for my taste. It is well known that when John Clare, the Northamptonshire poet, was transplanted for a month into the midst of the sorceries of London, the thing that charmed him most was the bewitchment of

the French actresses at the Tottenham Street Theatre.

As to me, I had never before seen a Frenchwoman. The peevish *émigrées*, who used to waste their time fretting over their fall, at Ormington Hall or in Hanover Square, scarcely deserved the name. As well call an oyster-shell an oyster,—as well consider the wooden puppet in a showman's box, the Punchinello, whose squeaking witticisms convulse the mob with merriment!—A Frenchwoman, properly so called, means not only a Parisian, but a Parisian in Paris. A Parisian must have her appropriate atmosphere, like the tender tropical plants, to refresh whose roots the watering-pot is warmed over a slow fire. Her leaves do not expand, or her flower-buds effloresce, unless sure of a *quantum suff.* of sunshine. *Il lui faut son Paris!*—But *in* her Paris, what a bewitching creature,—what a brilliant butterfly,—what a richly-scented blossom!—Nothing real about her, it is true—but the pre-

tence, how delightful !—One would put up with deception for ever, when so charmingly bamboozled !—

A *Parisienne*, properly so called, is a creature full of intelligence and grace ;—for her own enjoyment-sake, incapable of the yea-nay, dawdling, unmeaning nonentityism of London fashion.—Her countenance is bright with purpose. She wills resolutely, and, lo ! her will is accomplished ;—her rapid and strongly accented utterance imparting irresistible energy to her decrees.

Perhaps I was the more sensible to the *agrément* of this vivacity, because recent experience had put me somewhat out of conceit with my countrywomen. The very good ones, I had begun to consider fine,—and the very bad ones, coarse. The society of Byron had not improved my morality on such points. Lady Harriet Vandeleur (whom I found established in Paris, not exactly *la veuve de la grande armée*, but the idol of the new court,)

used to revile me with sacrilege against the sacred claims of my exceedingly loving countrywomen. No need to inform her ladyship that *she* was precisely one of those who had rendered me so hypercritical!—

Had I followed the bent of my inclinations, which nobody does in this world, least of all in the matter of falling in love, I verily believe I should have dedicated my affections to some choice specimen of the antique;—one of those charming little bits of the *Régence* still extant *au fond du Faubourg*. My early education seemed to have created me for a passion *à talons rangés*. I adored the high polish of those Sèvres-like marquises, transfixed in their *fauteuils*, and scarcely more alive than the effigies of their grandmothers from the pencils of Mignard or Rigaud. Yet though thus antilocomotive, what inimitable talkers!—A new chapter of Grammont's *Memoirs* seemed unfolded, when they narrated their incomparable little anecdotes of the incongruities of the court

of Joséphine, — that make-believe Versailles, where, like children on a holiday, *l'on jouait à la Madame !*

Of one or two of these classics, I was the pet and favourite ; better pleased to share their regard with their *griffon* and their abbé and be called “ *mon enfant* ” by their colourless lips, than “ *mon cœur* ” by the unrefined and vociferous fashionables of the Chaussée d’Antin.

But *homme propose, femme dispose*.— I was not to be my own master, that is, master of who should be my mistress. I could weep, now, to think of *l’occasion manquée !*—What an exquisite winter I might have spent in the warm, snug boudoir, of the charming old *Princesse de Trémont*, of whom Boufflers had been the lover, fifteen years before I was born !—What *causeries* we should have had together !—What an insight I should have obtained into the philosophy of life.—Instead of this, (dare I confess it ? — but I vow I had no more to do with the matter than one of the Chinese

magots on her chimney-piece,) instead of this, I was doomed to be excruciated out of all patience by the caprices and exactions of the young and fashionable Comtesse Anacharsis de la Vrillière !—

Thérèse — (I thought myself a wonderfully happy man the first day I was permitted to call her Thérèse !) — was the daughter of one of my mother's most favourite friends. One of Lady Ormington's first cares on arriving in Paris, was to inquire for the progeny of her darling Duchesse de St. Barthélemy, who had fallen a victim of the revolution ; and great was her indignation on hearing that the young Duke was wearing away his unpopularity in foreign travel, having actually figured at the court of Joséphine as equerry, or *grand échan-son*, or grand something or other in the way of courtiership. Had it been even Marie Louise, Lady Ormington and the Bourbons would have borne it. But it was that one of the Emperor's wives, who had not been an Emperor's daugh-

ter,—*la veuve Beauharnais*,—the woman my mother had refused to visit, as *mauvaise compagnie*, on her former visit to Paris!—

But in addition to the said degenerate Duke, the lovely Duchess had left a little girl, born about the same period as myself,—at least there was some sort of romance about a Paul and Virginia interchange of nursing. Little Thérèse, my contemporary, was now of course, according to the Parisian kalendar, an old woman,—that is, four-and-twenty; and pleasantry apart, a marriage at sixteen *is* apt to reduce four-and-twenty to decrepitude.

But then Thérèse, if an old woman, was a woman of transcendent fashion;—one of those angels without wings to whose delicate features the equally delicate pencil of Isabey has assigned immortality.

Go to Versailles, gentle reader.—Go to the museum dedicated to *toutes les gloires de la France*; and in the great picture of the baptism of the King of Rome, you will discover seated

in the tribune, surmounted by a coronet of diamonds, a face scarcely equalled in sweetness not only from those days to these, but from the days when Rome had Emperors, till those when the eternal city was required to acknowledge that very transitory little king. If it do not give you the idea of Miranda, “admired Miranda,” sunning herself in the smiles of Prospero in her tranquil island, may you never turn a page of Shakspeare again !—

Thérèse was not quite so pretty as that picture when I had first the honour of making her acquaintance ; but she was a lovely creature still. To me, there was something peculiarly interesting in her faded languor. I saw she was what is called *passée* ; and not possessing a Frenchman’s intuitive knowledge of such matters, instead of attributing her loss of bloom to the natural progress of events, chose to surmise a secret sorrow, “a worm i’ the bud.”

I fancied, according to my English creed, that in woman, four-and-twenty is the meridian

of beauty ; that, should these clouds of sorrow ever pass away, the obscured luminary would shine forth again, more effulgent and soul-subduing than ever.

I could not have flattered the pretty Comtesse more than by the construction with which I chose to dignify her defects. Thérèse would rather have been thought “ interesting,” than fair as Hebe. Thérèse had carved out her *rôle* in the world in sable drapery, or at least in French grey. Thérèse was *la femme incomprise* !—The phrase is *banal* now, exhausted, —effete. —Everybody understands the *femme incomprise*, and a woman might as well pretend to be an Egyptian mummy for any interest likely to be excited among the cunning fellows of *la jeune France*, by so exploded a pretension. But it was specious enough then. Universal sympathy was enlisted in the sorrows of a *femme incomprise*.

Monsieur le Comte de la Vrillière, the lord if not the master of the unappreciated lady,

was a very great man in his way, and a very large man, and in everybody's way; the very prototype that Bernard Léon depicts when, in the part of an *employé*, he distends his capacious chest like an air-cushion, exclaiming, "*Prenons le maintien d'un homme en place !*"

The Count's *maintien*, instead of being heavy and clumsy, like most unwieldy persons of my own country, was sinuous and graceful as one may conceive the Apollo Belvidere fed upon oil-cake, and weighing sixteen stone. He was rotund, without being shapeless,—rubicund, without being *couperosé*; — a *rosa grandiflora*,—two handsome men rolled into one !—

Impossible to be more *soigné* in his person. His grey hair and whiskers were arranged with as much care as if ambrosial curls. His coat was as scrupulously symmetrified by Staub as though his waist were as slender as his means were great; his boots were as well varnished as if the members they encased were not capable of playing the part of the Oriental ox and treading

out the corn. Monsieur le Comte Anacharsis de la Vrillière was spruce, lustrous, black, white, red, vivid, and got up to admiration. But in spite of all this, (the truth must out!) he was not the man to win a lady's eye or ear. His appetite was "more to bread than stone," and more to a succulent dish of cutlets, with an excellent *sauce à la Soubise*, than bread. The consequence was, *qu'il avait pris du ventre*; and a protuberance below the region of the heart, is more unsightly to the eye of woman, than the hunch of Æsop or hump of a buffalo.—Nothing in nature so antipathetic to an exalted imagination!—

There was nothing else that I remember particularly odious in La Vrillière, except that he had robust health, breathed hard after dinner, and possessed at all hours of the day a sort of insolently prosperous air, that must certainly have exposed him more than once in his life to peril of assassination from the brooms of crossingsweepers. It is an act of great self-denial in

beggars, to put up with a man so self-assertingly well to do in the world.

But if an object of hatred to the kennel, he was one of surpassing affection to the court—the court, *tale quale*.—He was just one of the men of whose moral and physical preponderance Napoleon knew so well to dispose! He possessed the very length, breadth, and thickness for a Préfet. His respectability of person and purse was the one thing needful to fill an Hôtel de la Préfecture, in a southern department; and during the last five years of the Empire, accordingly, Monsieur le Comte Anacharsis de la Vrillière had eaten his truffles fresh from the sod, with a stipend from government of eighty thousand francs a-year, and the opportunity of dedicating his income matrimonial of *cent mille francs de rentes*, towards upholding, on behalf of the Emperor, the dignities of the state.

The match was of Napoleon's making. Anacharsis de la Vrillière was a man of high de-

scent, who, beggared by the revolution, (which found him with a very good head on his shoulders and, strange to tell, left it there unmolested,) had managed by dexterous appropriation of his talents to the shifting exigencies of public life, to win back all he had lost, like a cunning gamester, taking his revenge on fortune. Directory, Consulate, Empire had successively found his Ko-too at their disposal. Power was with him the right divine; and like most of those,

Who, as the veering wind shifts, shift their sails,

a trade-wind blew him into port. He was, in short, one of the thousand Tartuffes of political life engendered by the schisms and vacillations of *la chose publique*.

Among the numerous rewards lavished upon him, by a sovereign in no position to deal hypercritically with the moral qualities of his partizans, was the hand of Mademoiselle de St. Barthélemy. As a rich orphan, she had been

of course Campanized; for as Frederick of Prussia chose to institute a Newmarket for the improvement of his race of grenadiers, by alliances between six-feet-two of hero with six-feet nothing of heroine, Napoleon of France, aware that the era of brute force was at an end, chose to giganticize *his* adherents by uniting men of ten thousand a-year in ambition with women of ten thousand a-year in possession.

Hence, the discrepant union between the soft, sentimental Thérèse de St. Barthélemy, and the prize animal, Monsieur le Comte Anacharsis de la Vrillière,—*conseiller d'état*—*chevalier de la légion d'honneur*, &c. &c. &c. Hence, *la femme incomprise*!—

For how was it possible for an individual of such dimensions, an individual who, if fossilized, would have afforded grounds to Cuvier for a new theory upon the degeneration of mankind, to enter into the *crises de nerfs* and *migraines*, hysterical affections and catalepses, of a diaphanous creature like Thérèse,

—a sylph, an aërial being,—liable to evaporate on the too rude touch of a mortal so materially material as Monsieur le Préfet?—

La Vrillière perfectly understood, on the first proposition of the match by his friend Cambacères, the substantial advantages attached to the possession of this unsubstantial bride; and, to do him justice, had never ceased to demonstrate his consciousness *d'avoir fait une excellente affaire*. In France, holy matrimony is always an *affaire*, — that is, an *affaire* of everything but the heart. He was a model husband. The pin money of Madame la Comtesse was as punctual as the *coupons* of the Bank of France. A new equipage every second year—diamonds reset every third—and annual *étrennes* from the glittering magazine of Jaset, which made many an envious eye of the Faubourg “pale its ineffectual fires,” attested the ardour of his conjugal devotion.

No one could say that the *salons* of Madame la Comtesse de la Vrillière lacked a single ob-

ject of fashionable adornment which Lesage or Ravrio, stated to be indispensable to a woman of fashion. When installed at her Préfecture, her fêtes, her toilet, her household establishment, created all the precedents of the province. She enjoyed, as the phrase runs, everything that money can give. But, alas ! it too often happens that people who enjoy everything in the power of money to give, enjoy also a redundancy of leisure, which begets an appetite for things that money will *not* give.

Madame la Comtesse de la Vrillière sighed for a sentiment ! Madame la Comtesse wanted to be “Thérèse.” Her indulgent husband, huge as he was, did not fill up the vacuum in her soul. He did not love her ;—and who would waste their affections on the unloving ?—She preferred being a victim. She chose to be *la femme incomprise* !—

Chateaubriand, the grandfather of the romantic school, and Madame Cottin, its eldest daughter, had usurped possession of her brain.

She had never recovered “Atala” and “Réné,” and had wept a Hellespont over “Claire d’Albe” and Malvine. She would rather have been the impassioned Matilde, blistering her feet with Malek Adhel, in the Syrian sands, than Madame la Préfette at —, or Madame la Comtesse, in the Rue du Montblanc. *Néobstand*, as her favourite writer would have said, I suspect, she was almost in hopes of a reverse of fortune, when Napoleon took refuge on board the Bellerophon.

It suggested itself to her sanguine imagination that the fat Préfet might possibly be incarcerated for life at Ham, or Mont St. Michel, or Blaye, or la Force, or, perhaps, driven into exile or emigration, (the idea of poor Anacharsis being *driven* anywhere!) to die at Cayenne or some other peppery colony. In that case, she determined to become a Sœur de Charité, one of the interesting victims of romantic life, whose costume is least unbecoming.

But to her surprise, almost to her indignation, the first person to whom the thanks of His Majesty Louis XVIII. were tendered for the promptitude of his oath of allegiance, was M. le Comte Anacharsis de la Vrillière, now Chevalier de St. Louis; and, lo! the daughter of the ancient and loyal house of St. Barthélemy was folded to the bosom of the Duchesse d'Angoulême, till she was ready to cry for vexation and mercy.

Not the smallest opening for heroism in *that* direction!—No hope of persecution—no chance of a reverse.—On the contrary, the family diamonds were reset a year sooner than usual; and on establishing herself anew in the Rue du Montblanc, a completely fresh *ameublement* saluted the repining eyes, whose only quarrel with the rumpling of the rose-leaf in her destinies was that it did not turn out a thistle or prickly pear.

Such was the position of the Countess, when I arrived at Paris. On the entrance of the

allies into Paris, the Count still occupied his prefectorial functions in the south ; or the *femme incomprise* would most likely have been appreciated by some General of Cossacks, or Hessian Field-marshal, Mohicanly, starred and feathered. But it was precisely at the moment my mother was beating the bushes of Boulainvilliers and the Luxembourg gardens, in search of such scatterlings of the covey of the *ancienne noblesse* as were still extant, that Monsieur le Comte et Madame la Comtesse Anacharsis de la Vrilliére were welcomed to the exceedingly soft bosom of the new Court.

Lady Ormington was overjoyed at the meeting. There had always been intense sympathy between her and the Duchesse de St. Barthélemy. They had drunk of the same Ether, and wept over the same page of the *Nouvelle Héloïse* ; and on discovering that the daughter who inherited the Duchess's name of

Thérèse, inherited also her nature as a swooner of swoons, and sympathizer of sympathies, Lady Ormington began to feel that she had recovered a congenial soul, in this younger and fairer moiety or rather quarter of herself.

Lady Ormington made a bad throw off, however, with her new idol. On her first introduction to the princely hotel in the Rue du Montblanc, with its damask hangings, gilt-bronze arabesques, carpets of Sallandrouze, and tables of malachite and lapis lazuli, she was *naïve* enough to congratulate its lovely owner on being thus profusely surrounded with the prosperities of life. Aware that Thérèse I. had lost her head, she seemed to think that Thérèse II. must be minus a heart; actually presuming that the wife of a man weighing eighteen stone, with an abdominal prominence, a great white forehead, and a great red face, could possibly be reconciled to her unpicturesque matrimonial destinies by the possession of var-

nished rosewood or damask of Lyons. Never was the *femme incomprise* more thoroughly misapprehended than at that moment.

But Lady Ormington was open to conviction. It did not take long to satisfy her that she looked upon one of the most unfortunate of her sex;—that the expressive countenance of the young Countess was indebted for its pensive paleness to wounded sensibility;—that her widowed soul was pining away in all the isolation of conjugal mismatchment! — Her ladyship was peculiarly qualified to enter into these delicate distinctions. She had been enacting the same tragedy,—comedy,—farce, (what shall I call it?) for the last quarter of a century; only that, not having been educated by Madame Campan, *her* phraseology was by no means so De Lamartinian, or her tones so plaintive.

In point of fact, she could not make out so good a case. Instead of being driven by a despotic Emperor, at the point of the bayonet,

into the arms of Lord Ormington, she had very thankfully accepted him for better for worse, three days after his presentation to her, at a country race-ball ; and was consequently sadly to seek in the epithets and superlatives with which the Comtesse Anacharsis de la Vrillière was entitled to qualify her barbarous sacrifice.

In an incredibly short time my poor mother became as convinced as her new friend could desire, that *la veuve du Malabar*, on the point of ascending the funeral pyre, was not more lonely in the world than her isolated self. If I wanted to fill a volume, instead of merely desiring to improve the minds of man and womankind by the promulgation of this my autobiography, I would favour the world, in detail, with a few of the pet phrases of poor Thérèse. But as they are precisely such as all French novelists, from Louvet and Crébillon down to the chaste pages of George Sand and Léon Gozlan, have assigned to *la femme incomprise*, whining her monotonous quail-call after the miss-

ing moiety of her soul, I respect the common sense and uncommon decorum of Great Britain.

When Lady Ormington first acquainted me with her treasure-trove in the *Chaussée d'Antin*, I turned an unwilling ear. There was about as much sentiment in my soul as in a jar of Jamaica pickles. "Campaigning at the King of Bohemy" had alloyed my double-refinement. At Paris, I had fallen in with a knot of Peninsular friends, excellent fellows, *bon vivants*, with whom it was much more agreeable to explore the *carte* of Véry and the *foyer* of the opera, than to sigh the perfumed sighs of a lady's boudoir. The only *parfait amour* which I was disposed to pronounce nectar, came out of the cellars of Chevet.

I never saw an Englishman yet, with any genuine vocation for these Platonic heroines, who seem to consider the purity of their minds so much less sacred than that of their bodies; and admit no bond of conjugal fidelity upon the honest affections of the heart. When-

ever Lady Ormington used to talk to me of the *femme incomprise*,—the chaste and lovely wife of the corpulent ex-Préfet,—I made it a point to answer her with rhapsodies about a *matelotte Normande* at the Rocher, or a dish of *tournedos* at the Frères Provençaux.

It happened, however, (*Maledetto sia 'l giorno, e 'l mese, e l'anno !*) that one day as I was trying, in the Bois de Boulogne, a horrible brute, such as the French horse-dealers of those anti-jockeyan days used to call a horse, the disrespectable quadruped turned restive ; and after seeing the leafless trees of the Bois run away from me for five minutes or so, a desperate crash seemed to bring heaven and earth together ; and after the crash, as might be anticipated, —chaos !—I was lying insensible on a heap of flints in the road leading to the Pavillon de Madrid.

The next sensation of which I was conscious, was that of awaking in heaven ; that is, awaking in a sort of dreamy Elysium, surround-

ed by fleecy eider-down,—muslin curtains,—the fragrance of *frangipane*,—the sobs of waiting maids,—and by way of antidote to all this delicious poison, the overhanging face of a doctor by whom I had been dephlogisticated in unknown quantities, looking exceedingly like a horned owl in Vitchoura and a pair of spectacles. I had never heard of such bipeds in the Elysian fields; and consequently took it for granted that I was still in the arrondissement of the Champs Elysées.

I was not fractured, only miserably contused; only destined to rise from my couch, piebald as the brute which had laid me there. To rise, however, was for the present out of the question. I was assured so by the gentle accents of an exceedingly plaintive voice; and to judge from the predictions of the spectacled owl who hooted affirmation of her intelligence, no chance of *dindes truffées*, or *St. Péray frappé*, for full six weeks to come!—This was very agreeable intelligence for a man who had daily

dinner-engagements to the end of the Carnival. There was however no help for it ; for when I raised myself from my pillow to remonstrate, I fell back and fainted.

On my second recovery, the withered face of the *chat-huant à bésicles* was replaced by one whose soft oval seemed thrown into more beautiful relief by the glossy bands of raven hair, in which it was enframed. But even the oval face had been nothing, without the foreign aid of two pearly tears that stood upon those pure and placid cheeks.—Tears !—tears of sensibility,—and shed for me !—From that moment, the soft touch of the slender and feeble fingers attempting to minister to my aid, communicated a gentle thrill to my bosom.—I was obliged to make haste and recover, in order to thank such a nurse as she deserved.—

In return for my thanks, she “gave me for my pains a world of sighs ;” acquainting me that, as she was returning through the Bois, from her villa at Suresne, she had met a horse

without a rider, and found a rider without a horse ; and that, howbeit her coachman addressed the former beast in the *factionnaire* phrase of "*passez au large*," her good Samaritanism had determined her to pause by the way-side, and pick up the desolate stranger ; who, being too fine a gentleman to wear anything in his pocket save a few loose Napoleons and small change, was still *Non Nominatus* in the mansion where, being a stranger, they had taken him in.

Never shall I forget the effect of the announcement by which I thought fit to reply to this delicate note of interrogation. No sooner had I declared myself to be an Englishman, (a declaration which my accent must have rendered superfluous,) by name Cecil Danby, and by domicile, resident at the Hôtel de Breteuil in the Rue de Rivoli, than my charming preserver uttered a sound which I conclude was what the novelists call "a faint scream," a thing I had always been particularly curious to hear,

from the moment of my acquaintance with the pages of Monk Lewis and Mrs. Radcliffe. I have a great mind to be poetical about it myself. Nothing would be easier than to liken it to the subdued cry of a bird, during an eclipse of the sun ; with which, if my readers be unacquainted, I am sorry for them, for there is nothing so plaintive in or out of nature. Suffice it, however (for I have an abhorrence of stage trick) that the eider-down bed was that of Madame la Comtesse Anacharsis de la Vrillière, —the soft twining fingers, those of the *femme incomprise* !—

Lady Ormington was instantly sent for ; and said, did, and cried all that it was necessary to say, do, and cry on such an occasion. It was a clear case that I could not be removed. Madame la Comtesse had not been so near the brink of a sensation for the last five years. Even the ex-Préfet was enchanted to render service to the offspring of one whom he remembered a reigning belle of the Trianon,

when he was himself aide-de-camp in '89, to Monseigneur the Comte d'Artois. In short, I seemed to have been thrown from my horse expressly to oblige them.

What a convalescence it was!—How different from that struggling back to life, at Belem, when conscious — no ! not conscious—anticipative of a great joy awaiting me, which I wanted only strength to clasp within my arms!—Now, I soon perceived that it was my business, for my own sake and the sake of others, to prolong my indisposition to the utmost verge of convalescence. “*Le mieux est l'ennemi du bien,*” says the proverb. I did not want to be better, or better off. I was as content to be returned “killed” on this occasion, as on that which had recommended me to the good-will of Lord Ormington.

Monsieur le Comte was just then most opportunely preoccupied with important business at the *Conseil d'état*. It was all he could do to pant into my room once in the twenty-

four hours, with inquiries after my health ; entreaties, very needless ones, that I would consider his house and all that it contained my own ; and assurances that the royal family had made the most minute inquiries of him into the condition of one in whom they were so deeply interested as the son of their good Lady Ormington, the brother of the great champion of European independence.

In reply, I looked as *pénétré*, as grateful, and as feeble, as I could contrive ; and would have allowed the horned owl to exhaust the last drop in my veins, rather than abridge my sojourn in that charming abode. It is all nonsense when northern imaginations pretend to luxuriate in descriptions of the gardens of Alcina,—or gardens of Armida,—or gardens of the Hesperides, or any other gardens,—poetical or prosaic. The very word “garden” has a damp, aguish sound to an English ear,—a sound as of water-engines and gravel rollers. If anybody wished to paint the bower of Circe in

a way to make its perils *really* alluring to a son of the mist or a son of the fog, he will make it a snug boudoir, having a patent fire-place—ponderous curtains—three-piled carpets—luxurious divan; and, by way of *garde-malade*,—a *femme incomprise*.—

I wrote word so to Byron. He and I were always squabbling, upon paper, about the poetry of nature and the poetry of civilization. It was a hollow pretension on *his* part, (he, who could not abide Wordsworth,) to declare in favour of

The silence that is in the starry sky,
The sleep that is between the lonely hills.

The sleep in which he really delighted, was anything but lonely; and, as to the starry sky, like myself, he was much fonder of the fluted damask of a luxurious tester. *Coucher à la belle étoile* might be very charming for those who, like Poussin's *bergère*, "lived in Arcadia;" but, between ourselves, dear reader, for people who live in the nineteenth century and pay

parish rates, it makes one's teeth chatter to think of.

I am pretty nearly sure, nay, I have a strong inclination to prove in black and white, in Childe Harold's hand-writing, (quite as authentic as that exhibited by certain of those pretended friends, who have so memorably abused his confidence,) that the episode of Haidee was planned and executed, as a sort of moral counterpoise to the pictures with which I favoured him in my letters, of my blessed existence in the Chaussée d'Antin. Byron evidently shipwrecked his hero, as a set-off to my spill,—imagined the cave, as a contrast to my boudoir,—and devised the fried eggs as an antithesis to my *violettes pralinées*. He even sketched the skittish Zoe as an impertinent set-off to my charming, little Manette. St. Spiridion be praised, there was no Lambro in the case!—for Monsieur le Comte Anacharsis de la Vrillière, conseiller d'état, ex-Préfet, *in esse*, and pair de France, *in posse*,

was as little akin to the old pirate-patriot, as I to Hercules.

Champfort has told us, and people have learned to give some credit to his sayings, that, "to oblige, is to attach ourselves; that by a noble provision of nature, a benefit conferred rewards itself by the bliss of love:" and if it be true that *l'on s'attache par ses bienfaits*, Madame de la Vrillière had every excuse for some predilection in my favour. Her kindness and charity far exceeded that of the Samaritan, whose bald-headed effigy, pouring a bottle of patent balsam into the wounds of the distressed man by the way-side, used aforetime to figure as a sign to the apothecary's shops.

Youth and beauty apart, Thérèse was a kind good creature; and if *incomprise*, really deserved to be understood. But it was herself to whom she was most an enigma; for she tried to coax herself into all sorts of absurdities and affectations, when nature had designed

her for the same honest calling as the great majority of her sex.

I dare say I did my part towards confirming her error ; for it was difficult not to wish that she might continue to undervalue her happiness as the wife of a man with so good an account at his banker's, and at the Château, and a disposition to gratify the inordinate whimsies of a Parisian wife ; for the influence of her morbid discontents was manifested in sitting beside my sick couch, —reading to me —talking to me “ far above singing,” —yet singing, too, whenever I expressed a wish to hear the gentle cadences of Romagnesi, breathed by the mellifluous notes of the favourite pupil of Garat. It was from *her* lips I learned those charming stanzas addressed by Madame de Walewska to Napoleon, —a model for all tender reproaches—I could not help flattering myself that there was what the French call *intention*, in the countess's energetic manner of enunciating the concluding verse.

“ Viens, donc, essayer les douceurs
D’une passion sans orage.
Que tu sois fidèle ou volage,
Rien ne désunira nos cœurs !
Pour te plaire, mon âme ardente
Découvre un nouveau sentiment.
Oui ! sans t’aimer moins vivement,
Je t’aimerai *mieux* qu’une amante.”

I, too, had discovered a new sentiment, as regarded the beautiful creature who thus generously devoted herself to my consolation. For, though aware of the utter groundlessness of her repinings, though convinced of the grievous wrong she did herself and those belonging to her, by lavishing on a chimera the affections due to her larger and legitimate moiety, I fell as much in love as if her woes were as real as those of Andromache, and I King Pyrrhus of execrated memory.

There may be some among my readers who take the thing *au sérieux*, and see nothing in all this to laugh at ; who consider, with Lady Ormington, that it is a cruel torture for a woman of “exquisite sensibilities,” a woman

organized to “die of a rose in aromatic pain,”—a woman for whom the moon has influences that “cause every nerve to vibrate to an unseen centre in the soul,”—a woman for whom “music hath a language mystic as the lyre of Apollo,”—a woman worthy to have been chosen as the partner of the “*Mari Sylphe*,” united for better for worse with a soulless, sordid being, whose sensibilities were invested in the 5 per cents. and whose tenderest point was his digestion! They may even bring themselves to regard, as Lady Ormington did, *la jolie* Comtesse, as a moral Alexander Selkirk, and her charming hotel, as a sort of island of Juan Fernandez, till they bring tears into their own eyes with their own nonsense.

Had I been ever blessed or cursed with wife or daughter, or possessed a right to exercise the tyrannies of legitimate proprietorship over any fraction of the gentle sex, how careful would I have been to inspire her with enthusiasm for some definite pursuit!—rational, if

possible ; at all events, some pursuit. Men are too apt to sneer at the frivolities of women's accomplishments ; to find fault with daubings of water-colours, embroiderings of tiffany, collections of autographs, emblazonings of missals. —My brethren ! take the advice of a bachelor deeply studied in such mysteries. Failing the maximum, accept the minimum, and be thankful. Till your better or worse halves acquire, by force of education, a taste for higher occupation, discourage nothing that yields harmless employment to their leisure. In a class of life where neither household nor nursery exercise peremptory demands, beware of the lapse of listless hours !—Beware of the peevish retrospections of reveries !—Beware of the want of excitement arising from want of occupation !—It is in the unenclosed waste that the thistle wings its seeds of mischief ; it is in the neglected hedgerow, that the night-shade twines its deadly branches.

Had Thérèse been only able to conjure up an

innocent enthusiasm for any one of the busy idlenesses of life, she would have seen in the rotund Anacharsis the indulgent friend who cheered her occupation; sauntering into her boudoir from the *Conseil d'état*, to confide his little grievances of public life, and listen in return to histories of colours that would not blend,—canvas that would not dry,—camellias that would not bud,—or any other of the trivialities that become important, when prattled about by rosy lips to willing ears.

But her play and her work were alike done *for* her. Her embroideries were bought ready stitched, her camellias ready grafted. Her very album, instead of being extracted, drawing by drawing and sonnet by sonnet, from her friends, with pain and anguish, like so many teeth, had been laid on her dressing-table, one new year's morning, filled with exquisite performances by Robert, Isabey, Lemaître, Ingres, Guérin, Lemière. *En un mot*, as the French say, after wasting a whole dictionary, there was nothing

left for her to do to amuse herself, — but mischief!—

Pretty much the same thing that made my friend Byron, at four-and-twenty, a misanthrope, converted Thérèse at the same age into a *femme incomprise*.

Be it observed that no sooner had the noble poet a real grievance to complain of,—a wife who rejected him, and a child from whom he was forcibly divided,—than he ceased to adorn his verses with anguish and remorse; and Childe Harold, really aggrieved, became the laughing, joyous, devil-may-care Don Juan. I have a shrewd notion, that had the corpulent ex-Préfet taken to beating his wife, *she*, too, would have renounced her green and yellow melancholy; and become, what nature intended her to be, an open-hearted energetic creature, full of warm feelings and resentments. Nay, had the prosperous *conseiller d'état* even become a bankrupt, or a traitor, in spite of his bulbous form she would have turned out a devoted wife!

But the poor soul wanted excitement. She wanted something to prevent her sitting over her boudoir fire all winter, or dreaming in her conservatory at Suresne all summer,

—— Gathering sweet pain
About her fancy till it thrilled again.

Unluckily for *her*, perhaps unluckily for me, she found that something in Cecil Danby ! How happy she was, now that we occupied the post of danger together. In what whims and vagaries we used to indulge ! Word by word, sigh by sigh, I translated “ The Giaour ” for her ;—Byron not having as yet undergone at the hands of the French, those rinsings in cold water, by which they have managed to extract all colour out of his poetry without encreasing its purity.

Like Othello, I told her campaigning tales that would have filled volumes of the Standard Novelists ; and by dint of plenty of orange-groves and quintas, ‘ modinhas and segudadillas, made her free of the Peninsula, just as poor

Emily had talked me into ecstasy about Portugal, in the old box at the Opera.

While recounting my

Hairbreadth 'scapes in th' imminent deadly breach, my adventures in conflagrated convents and slaughtered villages, her pale cheek used to become gradually suffused, and her mournful eyes progressively animated. My whole story was reflected in her face as in a camera obscura.

She was a capital listener ; "an excellent thing in woman," and rare as excellent. An intelligent countenance bent upon one while telling a story, is positively colloquial. What are the vulgar ejaculations of wonder and satisfaction with which common-place people interrupt a narrator, compared with the speaking blush, the flashing glance, which, though no interruption, cries, "Bravo !"—or "Alas !"—in accents not to be mistaken ?—

But the thing that delighted her most in all this, or the thing which she *said* delighted her most, was my *appreciation* of her power of en-

tering into my joys and sorrows ; — my confidence in her ; — my reliance upon her friendship. — *I* understood her, she said. With *me* she was not *la femme incomprise*. She even indulged in certain little Goëtheisms about kindred souls, and our comminglement of mind at Boulainvilliers, four-and-twenty years before. It was not *my* cue to apprise her that I did *not* confide in her ; that I told her only what I would have told to the fellows at Watier's, and the brother officers of my brigade ; or that I *had* bosom secrets, memories of a departed love, and grievances against a nominal father, which I would no more entrust to her keeping than to the hands of the marble Atalanta, skimming in cold indecent self-exposure along the gardens of the Tuileries.

Lady Ormington was often with us, — so often, that we called it always ; and it might have been always, for there was nothing in her presence that imposed silence upon our mutual professions. Our Cupid was one of

those humbugging little boys who, because *sans ailes*, i. e. because heavy and stupid, chooses to call himself "*l'Amitié et non l'Amour*." If I may be allowed to insinuate so much in a whisper, I suspect that, had my indisposition been prolonged another fortnight, he would have become *l'Ennui*. To keep up with the overstrained exaltation of Thérèse, was very much like the feat accomplished of late years by Paganini, of playing on the fourth string a fantasia much better performed on the whole instrument. I was flattered, however. It was my delight to *tutoyer* the *femme*, no longer *incomprise*. She, the cold, supercilious, Comtesse de la Vrillière, insisted on being called Thérèse by an ex-Colonel of Portuguese dragoons,—had I not reason to be proud,—had I not reason for protesting that, —but I blush to write myself down so incomparable an ass !

Passons là dessus !—Suffice it that it was a bore to one or other of us when the time came for removing to the Hôtel de Breteuil. But

there was no help for it, though the tears of Thérèse pattered down like showers of April hail. Had not the *Conseiller d'état* taken to roll his eyes like an ogre when he visited our infirmary, and to breathe as hard as a hunted rhinoceros when he sonorously sucked in his coffee with us after dinner, I verily believe I should never have had courage to tear myself away.

CHAPTER V.

Malo me fortunæ pœniteat, quàm victoriæ pudeat.

QUINT. CURT.

Honte à celui qui, déshérité de religion, ne voit dans la sainte confiance d'une femme, qu'une ame à dépraver.

MICHEL RAYMOND.

LET my readers be so obliging as to recall to their minds, unless the remembrance be already there present, that all this occurred the year preceding the battle of Waterloo; when Englishmen maintained in Paris very different ground from the position afterwards conceded to them. As yet, the Cossacks had the crown of the causeway; and even Louis XVIII. would not have dared exhibit towards us any preference over his Muscovite pio-

neers to the throne, or his Parisian supporters thereupon.

It behoved me, therefore, to do nothing to enrage Anacharsis, the great or big, as I had no means of securing his misunderstood wife from his displeasure. Jealousy of her preference was not likely to disturb his peace of mind; but he would not have put up tamely with being made ridiculous.

Except in humble life, indeed, French husbands are as rarely betrayed into the honest resentment of jealousy, as into any other breach of politeness. To a great extent, self-esteem is their protection; to a greater, that "untaught innate philosophy" which prevents them from being

Over exquisite
To cast the fashion of uncertain evils.

I suspect, however, that more than one of those whom I saw welcoming to their houses, with the utmost cordiality, the man whom, for their honour's sake, they were bound to lay

under the sod of Montmartre or Charonne, were enduring the agony of the Spartan, with the gnawing fox hid under his cloak. No anguish more bitter to bear than that arising from some capitulation of conscience ; — which, unsuspected by the world, is ever before us,—like phosphorescent light shining only the more vividly for that gloomy secresy.—

Whenever I returned to the Rue du Mont-blanc, as in gratitude bound, if only as a favoured guest, I was sure to find the ex-Préfet playing the sentinel in the vicinity of his wife's apartments.

What business had he there at such a time ?

Why was he not at his Conseil d'état ?—or the Château ?—or the Chambre des Députés ? — or the Chambre du Commerce ? — Why should he be always circling like a bat, round her apartments ; — or rather, like the lap-wing, watching the approach of strangers to its nest, and trying to mislead them by its man-

œuvres. Had he been warned by some officious friend?—Had my mother's crabstick of a toady attempted to perturb *his* mind with the fears she was labouring to infuse into that of Lady Ormington?—Or was Mademoiselle Manette of opinion that the sick man whose *tisanes* she had sweetened so carefully with *sirop de cérisés*, and whose *compresses* she had so diligently applied, ought to have been more exclusive in his gratitude?—That I *was* ungrateful towards her, is proved by the slightness of my mention, in these souvenirs, of one who deserves honourable commemoration.

Manette Larue was a type of the French *femme de chambre*;—smart, active, clever, ignorant, interested, generous,—both good, bad, and indifferent.—During the serious part of my illness, I had been left almost entirely in her hands. A beautiful Comtesse of four-and-twenty could not officiate as sick-nurse to a young gentleman of the same years, even though a cradle associate; and by law of the

code of delicacy, which entitles Norah in white dimity to see, hear, and understand all that must be a mystery to Tilburina, in her white satin,—Manette, a pretty girl of twenty, became *valet-te de chambre* to my *robe de chambre*.

I had of course no objection. But I was not equally satisfied to be taken into the familiar confidence of the young lady in the cambric apron, after a few days' acquaintance. Mademoiselle Manette having "occasion," as she said, "to go out unknown to her lady," (who, in spite of her listlessness, was exceedingly rigid in her household subordination, as the indolent Creole women make the cruelest mistresses under the canopy of Heaven,) appealed to my generosity for an authorization to say that she went upon an errand of mine.

For once, I was good-natured,—for twice, patient,—for thrice, almost placable. But when I found I was to be made the scapegoat of Mademoiselle Manette's systematic irregularities, I grew angry; and used certain strong

expressions of condemnation, bringing tears, but no amendment. As regularly as Madame la Comtesse, at the sound of the dinner-bell, quitted my invalidery to take her place opposite the fat ex-Préfet and his favourite *Truite à la Gênévoise*, she used to utter her parting injunctions to the *soubrette* to remain in the ante-room during her absence, in case I should be in need of assistance. Just as regularly, used Mademoiselle to slip out the instant the argand lamps of the dining-room shone through its crimson curtains, and slip back an hour afterwards, her cheeks and eyes brightened by collision with the winter atmosphere, with a little Jesuitical inquiry of—" *Monsieur n'a-t-il eu besoin de rien ?—*"

I could have pardoned everything but the *air rayonnant* with which she rubbed her hands as she approached the fire-place. She was evidently half frozen, yet as happy as a queen! Was it to be expected that I should forgive her preferring a chilly saunter along the quays

or Boulevarts, at that time of night, to attendance upon one so amiably disposed towards her and hers, as the Honourable Cecil Danby !—

The leisure of sickness is a powerful stimulant to curiosity. As my soul was not whisking in the clouds, or as Thérèse called it, commercing with the skies, after the fashion of the *femme incomprise*, I grew painfully inquisitive about Manette. My own man, O'Brien, (little Tim, whom I had resumed on my return from the wars, having progressed from the tiger to the own man,—and an incomparable own man too,) was civil enough to participate in his master's indiscreet wonder as to what could take this slight, delicate creature, freezing into the snow, at the risk of a *rhume de cerveau*, her reputation, and her place. I fancy he even emulated my example so far as to express a strong opinion to her that, since the entrance of the Allied armies into Paris, its *femmes de chambres*, however well worth looking at, were

scarcely worth speaking of. But Manette, who had cried at *my* expostulations, only laughed at those of O'Brien ; conscious, I suppose, with a woman's tact, that in such matters she could influence *his* opinions, though compelled to appear influenced by mine.

This had been going on a fortnight, and I was getting angry, and O'Brien *very* angry ; when one morning, as he opened my shutters to admit the light into that Peri cell of a chamber, instead of asking me, as usual, how I had rested, he took the liberty of acquainting me, that *he* had not closed his eyes. I swallowed a strong remark I was about to make about his eyes ; and waited to see what impertinence would come next. O'Brien, in his progress into a finished gentleman's gentleman, had of course, like all Connaught Rangers, abjured the brogue. In Portugal, (whence I had despatched him home to his father, lest he should become food for powder, instead of progressing towards hair-powder,) he had acquired a sort of lingua franca.

In the polite circles of the west-end valetocracy, he had superadded London slang to his polyglot acquirements. But the moment his feelings were concerned, I observed that the fellow invariably relapsed into a brogue as broad as Connemara!—

“Will thin, Cornel, yer honour,” said he, approaching the bed, “sure wasn’t we out intirely, sir, whin we took on oursilves to pass judgmint, like bastes as we was, (I humbly big your pardon, Cornel, sir, in regard as I same to be forgittin’ mysilf,) upon Miss Maynit, Cornel. Yer honour said to me, last evening, says you, that is, ye didn’t say it, exactly, but ye looked it, Cornel, if iver there was maning in a pair iv handsome eyes, sir,—says you — ‘Tim,’ says you, (that is, ’twas O’Brien, I belave, yer honour was afther callin’ me, but no matter for that!)—‘O’Brien,’ says you, ‘as soon as iver Miss Maynit stips over the thrishold, this blissed avening,’ says you,—‘follow her, my lad, follow her, if it be to the city’s ind,’ says yer

honour, 'and be plased to lit me know the sacret iv all these quare outgoings and incomings, unbeknownst to the missus,' says you."

My dignity rose up against the espionage imputed to me by the excited valet de chambre. But, as I said before, a sick bed is the hot-bed of inquisitiveness: so, not to interrupt him, I held my peace.

"Upon which, says I, 'Cornel,' says I, 'I shall do that, sir, with all the veins,' says I. So I up with my caubeen, and no sooner did the little gurrl call out, as usual, to the consyairge, 'Cord Dong!' and out iv the gate, like a gray'und, — wasn't I afther her! — staling as quite and unconsarned over the snow, as though staling was the bus'ness I was afther! — And Gad forgive me, Cornel, sir, for the avil thochts as intired my hid, whin I saw the pretty little darlin' turn the carner iv the Boolvard, Cornel, and skit along, like a Dutch woman on her skaits, (bliss the little lig's iv

her!) till we com'd to the *Ploss de Louwy*,—some folks calls it *Kanze*,—some *Says*,—and some *Con-cord*, which is the more nat'ral, as they say 'twas the spot whare the gallows stud, as made away with the poor craythurs of lards and leedies i' the Rivolution, sir.—Will, sir,—right across it runs Miss Maynit, sir; and afore I could fitch my brith, if its *Says* the *Ploss* is called, Cornel, by my troth, she was half *says* ovver, she was, the darlin'!"—

“Will you be so very obliging as to get on, or to let me know what you are driving at, O'Brien?—” said I, affecting to look most yawnishly indifferent to his narrative.

“Sure an't I gittin' on, Cornel, sir? Only, yer honour, an Irishman, Gad pity him! must always be lit git on in 's own way, ilse he 's apt to be bothered, sir. Will, Cornel, I was at the *Ploss Louwy Says*,—no, I warn't—I was at the quay, sir, forenent it; opposite the parliment house, where they spake sich outlandish talk, sir, that no dacent boy 's a word the

bitter for 'em, Cornel. And still, sir, I kipt my eye as sharp 's an awl, Cornel, on the little gurrll, which was coursing on like a hare, uvver the snow."

(A hint of Virgil's Galatea, "*et se cupit*," was on the tip of my tongue.)

"Only, sir, to do justice to Miss Maynit, not a look to the right or lift did she iver sind, sir, from the moment she crossed the blissed thrishold iv this house, Cornel, till she took brith on the Boolvard, which they call the Invalids; — and a very gentale name too, for a hospital iv ould soldiers; more agraille afar sight than pinsioners, it is, in my poor notion. But h'wiver, as I was asayin', Cornel, if Miss Maynit *had* been gaddin' a mischievin', or staring about her, yer honour, wouldn't she ha' found out at onst as there was one in her rare who, maybe, had particular notions iv his own in dadgin' her in sich an unjontlemanlike manner, Cornel?" —

"And pray can't you say at once, O'Brien,

that Mademoiselle Manette turned short round upon you, and treated you as you deserved for prying into her proceedings?"—

"Small loock to me, sir, if she did onything iv the kind, Cornel!" cried O'Brien, strenuously. "Sure, sir, was I so badly brocht up as not to know how to make mysil' scarce ahind one iv the great ould trees in the Boolvard, Cornel, the moment I saw her casthing her blissid little papers round, sir?—But not to kape ye in surpinse, Cornel, (for I pursave y'are anxious as I was mysilf to git to the botthom iv the business,) lit go by a quarther iv an hour, Cornel, and fancy me with my eye to the shittthers iv a poor mane-looking house,—little bitther than a Connaught cotthar's, Cornel,—in what they call the *Av anoo de Britool*; for 'twas in thare, sir, I 'd watched the young gurrl. And what was her business I 'd like to know?"—

"What was her business to *you*, O'Brien?"—said I, with magisterial dignity. "How would *you* like to be followed and pried after, by a

person having no sort of claim to inquire into your affairs?"

"Thin, faix ! I 've done, Cornel !" — said the crest-fallen O'Brien, affecting to take my jobation to heart, as a pretence for disappointing me of the sequel, which he saw I was dying to hear. But not to harass and perplex the reader as my own man contrived to perplex and harass *me* by sporting with my curiosity, I will pass over O'Brien's doublings to escape me, and place before him the *dénouement* of Manette's adventure, as I at length contrived to extract it from the lips of the humbler of her two admirers.

That squalid abode was the habitation of her father, a poor out-pensioner of the Hôtel des Invalides ; an old fellow with a timber leg, and a head of somewhat more impressionable materials. It was not pride that induced little Manette to make a mystery of all this in the Hôtel de la Vrillière. She was much too kindly-hearted a little soul to feel

a moment's false shame on the subject ; and to do justice to the French, there is scarcely an item of domestic virtue in which they are more commendable, than their devotedness of filial affection. But old Pierre Larue, it appeared, was an inveterate drunkard ; and having lost her last situation in the establishment of a *grande dame de la cour*, in consequence of an affray in the establishment caused by a visit from the old soldier after his fourth bottle of *piquette*, she now scrupulously avoided all communication with the Avenue de Breteuil, likely to lead to explanations.

In the Hôtel de la Vrillière she passed for an orphan ; when, in fact, every *pièce de vingt-sous* of her earnings went to soften the hard fortunes of the old soldier.

Unluckily, the winter had gone harder than usual with the poor Invalid, and the infirmities consequent upon his inveterate propensity threatened a speedy end to his woes. When Manette visited him with her *étrennes* on

the *jour de l'an*, she found that, in consequence of gross misconduct, he had been struck off the out-pension list, and had taken to his bed for consolation. There was no one to attend to the old creature. There he lay, to moan away the hours that were numbered; and though the poor girl instantly applied a portion of the sum she had brought with her, to procure a nurse, a doctor, and the remedies of which he stood in need, she rightly conjectured that the moment her back was turned, wholesome medicaments would be exchanged for *petits verres*, and the sick man and his *garde* unite in a carouse.

It was to watch over their proceedings that, evening after evening, Manette took her weary way across the Place Louis XV, with the bitter wind or bitterer sleet driving in her pretty face; incurring the certainty of insult from the loungers on the Boulevarts, and the certainty of dismissal, should Madame la Comtesse come to the knowledge of her escapade.

“Och ! Cornel, yer honour, if ye could have seen the little craythur, sir, as she leant over the crazy chair iv the poor ould bald-headed brute iv a father iv her,—coaxing him and axing him was it a pain here and was it a pain there, as made him look so downhearted,—whin it didn’t require the gumption iv a fly to pursave, sir, that what he was so much the worse for, was nothing more than the liquor, for sure he was what you call jist comfortable, Cornel ;—and I ’ll be bound, it was two darlins iv daughters he saw hangin’ over him, and two ould jades iv nurses, coddlin’ up the *potofoo*, as they call it, over the fire !—”

“Poor Manette !” said I, with earnest sympathy.

“Poor, yer honour ?—” interrupted Tim, (I cannot call him O’Brien, when I recall him to mind in one of his moments of Irish enthusiasm,) “I ’ll be bound, Cornel, that the angels in hiven thocht her a divil sight richer woman, that moment, than my lady, the Countess,

here, wid her gold smillin'-bottles,—and her 'stirricks, — and diamond necklaces, — and coaches and four, — and all the luxrys in loife, Cornel."

Without troubling myself about what the angels of heaven might decide between Thérèse and her waiting-woman,—both incontestably angels on earth in the eyes of Cis Danby and his own man,—I commissioned O'Brien to charge himself with the conveyance of a sufficient purse to the old Invalid, backed with all the tea-totalizing precepts he could contrive to invest in intelligible French. It did not surprise me to find that he had managed to escort Mademoiselle Manette home the preceding evening; and, as the brevity of their absence clearly proved that they must have run all the way, it was difficult to conceive how, with poor Tim's inadequate knowledge of the language, he had contrived to insinuate himself into the particulars with which he now favoured me, upon her filial authority, of

Pierre Larue's failings, frailties, misfortunes, and services.

"Sure, Cornel, sir, afore I'd yer honour's orders for that same," said he, "I'd as good as promised the little gurr! to have an eye to the ould sinner, and privint his addin' a nail to his coff'n with ivry frank she was able to lay up for his maintainance." And that O'Brien would perform his duty to Manette, as well as Manette had performed hers to her parent, I had very little doubt.

For a moment, I was half inclined to appeal to the tender mercies of Thérèse in behalf of the father and child. But I was beginning to understand the *femme incomprise* well enough to know that I should harden her heart to the consistency of Pharaoh's, by an avowal of interest in any appurtenance of her sex.

One of my first airings when re-established at home, however, was to drive to the Esplanade des Invalides, and verify the condition of the old soldier. It was no great effort on

my part to contribute my obolus to the last days of one of Napoleon's *braves*. But I confess it was with regret I saw my own man so thoroughly sympathize in my weaknesses, as to leave little doubt that he would shortly find French enough, or Mademoiselle Manette learn Irish enough, to enable them to swear eternal constancy.

This is a long digression ; — more particularly as the *calèche* of Thérèse, with its beautiful pair of bays, is waiting to convey me to the Bois de Boulogne. Every day, after I left her house, did she insist upon administering to my airings ; my mother's carriage being a close one, and air expressly advised for me. Just, therefore, as the poor Duchesse de St. Barthélemy and Lady Ormington had driven, day after day, on that very spot, past the self-same haha of the Muette or wall of Bagatelle, five-and-twenty years before, did Thérèse and Cecil, the *femme incomprise* and the *malade imaginaire*, enjoy every afternoon

in addition to each other's society, the delicious fragrance of that wood of underwood, carpeted with violets and wild anemones, and displaying between the tall stems of the chestnut-trees whose great resinous buds were just opening to disclose the pale green leaflets within,—thickets of blackthorn, bright with snow-white blossoms, and affording some excuse for the exulting notes of the linnets and chaffinches making such a deuce of a fuss about the return of spring.

All that sort of pastorality is charming in its proper place.—Nobody likes it better than I do, within the fourteen lines of a sonnet,—in the prose of Sir Philip Sidney, or the occasional poetry of the Lady Melusindas of the Book of Beauty, who have nothing else to write about. But I *do* hate a woman who *talks* daffodils and woodbines!—If you have a frailty for the Annual School, gentle reader, I mean the tender Annual School, pardon me.

But I must again declare myself a mortal foe to the sighs that are sighed, and the civilities that are said, in Sapphics and Iambics. The time is gone by for Florian's shepherds and shepherdesses; and as for Gessner, should his works ever be republished in this country, they will be illustrated by Cruikshank, or Phiz. The only *fidèle berger* extant, besides the famous confectioner in the Rue des Lombards, is poor old Chateaubriand, who still drivels a bit of lambkinism, now and then, in the season of green peas. But even the old Vicomte, is beginning to forswear his crook.

With these vulgar prejudices, it will be believed that I was ill prepared for the eglatinian sweetnesss budding from the gentle soul of Thérèse, as the primroses put forth their leaves. I dare not say how great a bore I thought her. Having outgrown my first childhood, and not achieved my second, I could see no very particular necessity for being bound

to the rack of fine sentiment, while there was so good an opera in Paris, and such a variety of capital *restaurants*.

By her own will, Madame la Comtesse would have had me Haroldize to the very brink of misanthropy. *I could not*,—for the life and soul of me I could not!—If the memory of her whose hair I still wore as a pledge of unavailing affection, were incapable of exalting my imagination, not all the countesses of the Chaussée d'Antin could screw me up to concert pitch. I had now recommenced my *vie de garçon*. As soon as I grew strong again, breakfasts at Tortoni's began the day, to conclude with a gay supper at the Mille Colonnes; and the Montagnes Russes, the Salon, and fifty other brilliant follies, filled up the interval.

I had, in fact, no longer any decent pretext for loitering away my days in the boudoir or *calèche* of Madame la Comtesse Anacharsis de la Vrillière, seeing that they were also those of Monsieur le Comte; and, though by dint

of being called a monster of ingratitude fifty times a day, either *vivá voce*, or on pink satin paper, I had begun to consider myself a charming young man, even Lady Ormington was fain to confess that I had every excuse for my apparent remissness, in the hint afforded to me by my gracious friend, the Duc de Berri, that I was endangering the peace of mind of the corpulent ex-Préfet, by exposing^e to the disapproval of Madame d'Angoulême the conduct of his wife.

I scarcely know whether it were prudence on the part of her ladyship, (who, being in the confidence of the *femme incomprise*, was not only a frequent witness of her *crises de nerfs*, but aware that she was susceptible of being wound up to perpetrate the most unaccountable extravagances,) or whether some mysterious forewarning announced to her the return of the Emperor; but, one fine day, I found post horses to our travelling carriage, our affairs wound up by the united exertions

of Toady Richardson and Lady Ormington, and our passports and everything else in readiness for departure.

I burst into remonstrances. I began to plead dinner engagements, and all sorts of engagements, as an excuse for doing what I liked. But my mother had secured an argument for immediate departure, against which there was no contending. She protested that Lord Ormington was alarmingly ill, and had *ordered* us home.

It was not till we were fairly ensconced in the horrible little parlour in the old Ship at Dover, — a hostelry which well deserved its name, for its rooms were cabins,—that she told me the plain truth, (which was about as palatable as other plain truths,) that she had employed subterfuge to withdraw me from a spot where my fortunes and virtues seemed to be following the course of the courage of Bob Acres.

I was in a most unfilial rage !—The moment

was ill chosen to acquaint me that I had been made a fool of.

In the first place, I had all the reminiscences of the steam packet fresh upon me. Any humane individual introduced fire-proof into the terrors of Tophet, must suffer, if possible, greater anguish than the damned. How much more the healthy man on board a steam packet, exposed to—but why nauseate my readers?

In the next place, I had the irritation of finding myself dipping in the dish with the “*dam’ d’honour* ;”—and I swear I had rather have hob-and-nobbed with old Pierre Larue.

In the third place, after the exquisite course of gastronomy I had recently been following, I was reduced to the aboriginal food of the Britons ; not exactly the hips, haws, and acorns of the Saxon Heptarchy,—but worse, far worse, the beefsteaks and apple-pie of a Red Lion bill of fare ; the *culotte de peau grillé*,—the *charlotte de pommes* baked in a basin !—The waiter asked me whether I pleased to take malt

liquor ; while an agreeable vapour of sulphur issuing from the dingy fire-place, seemed to add a local colouring to the peculiar emphasis of my execrations.—All was as the devil would have it !—

People prose about the influence of education upon the human mind ;—talk to me of its power over the human stomach !—It would require an abler pencil than mine to depict the extraordinary delicacy that may be imparted to the digestion, the exquisite discrimination to the palate ; but let me briefly observe, that the whole mechanism of the organs of deglutition may be trained and tutored, till it becomes fine as that of Breguet's watches. More than once, on returning to England after long sojourn in France, I have sustained a serious illness from the crudity of the tough meats and parboiled vegetables. The thick sauces, spiced into blackness, the horrible astringency of walnut catsup pervading every made dish, has brought on the most cruel derangement of the

epigastric functions. Were I a fire-eater, I would make money of the faculty, by showing myself at a fair; not by swallowing cayenne and new port, without “poison” labelled on either dish or decanter.

Now-a-days, indeed, the transition is less striking; the best French cookery being got up and got down in London. The *haute cuisine* of Paris is *en décadence*. The junior branch of the Bourbons have done nothing for the *casserole*.—The dinners of the King of the French are given by contract; and there has been serious talk of establishing a *bureau de pompes dinatoires* on the model of that of the *pompes funèbres*, where official or private dinners might be regulated according to the tariff.—What a pendant to the truly regal glories of the museum at Versailles!

At the period of which I am writing, however, the Empire still dominated in the national institutions of the land. All was great, or at least, *grandiose*.

Posterity has rendered justice to the legislative wisdom of Napoleon. The Empire has been called the triumph of this and the triumph of that. The soldier twists his moustache, and talks of the *victoires et conquêtes* of the *Petit Caporal*.—The political economist praises the organization of his financial system ;—the legist quotes his code ;—the *curé* his *réhabilitation* of the Church ;—the man of science, the man of letters, the artist, his protection of the academies :—and many a great name is dragged out of the pocket of history, in confirmation of their praise, which would never have found its way there save under sanction of the fosterage of the Emperor.

In point of fact, the real triumph of his reign, was its gastronomy. The greatest exploit accomplished by the *grande armée*, was its march from one end of Europe to the other, with the *almanach des gourmands* in its *sabretache*. Let them sing of the victorious Eagle flying from *clocher* to *clocher* !—Reality is more

sublime than romance. The real perch of the Eagle was from spit to spit !—

This is not vague assertion. The tone of an epoch is indelibly impressed upon its literature. Look at that of the Empire ! Look at the sleek periods of Joüy.—Does not *perdreau truffé* exude from every line ?—Look at the songs of Desaugiers,—of Beranger.—Could any age that did not keep a good table produce such *chansons à boire* ?—Grimod de la Reyniere is one of the conscript fathers of literature,—the originator of a style,—as much a creator in his way, as the authors of *Fleur d'Epine*, or *Vathek*, or *Waverley*, or *Childe Harold*.—Even the music of the days of Napoleon has a ring of Sèvres' dishes and champagne glasses in it. The Opéra Comique had never had anything so joyous as *Joconde*, or the *Calife de Bagdad* !—

Half the horrors of the prevailing school of French literature, on the other hand, are attributable to the decline of the *cuisine*: a moral indigestion consequent upon a physical. Old

Burton assigns the engendering of melancholy chiefly to flatulence, in terms too matter-of-fact for these matter-of-lying days; and just as the monstrosities of Monk Lewis's Tales of Wonder were traced by the acumen of the reviewers to suppers of raw pork, the flagran-
cies of the Spasmodic School arise from the gritty dinners of Véfour, or the heterogeneous suppers of the Café de Paris.

How different these fashionable *gargotes* from the really classical temples of Beauvilliers, Véry, or Gacques!—Scarcely a trace remains of the *restaurants* of the Empire. The Pavillon d'Hanovre is a haberdasher's,—the Café de Mille Colonnes a theatre,—Robert's, afterwards Lointier's, a new street,—Beauvilliers' a cluster of shops. Even Grignon's exists no longer. Those days, when the table of the Archi-chancelier Cambacérès was a vatican that fulminated its bulls, (in the form of *bœuf à la mode*, or *à l'Italienne*,) to the uttermost ends of Europe,

when the Maréchal de France, returning ravenous from his campaigns to the domestic hearth where simmered the *pot au feu*, afforded, like Alexander, a premium to the man who would create a new dish, and thus created the great school of the Udes and Carêmes,—also brought back the famished lieutenant, content to lavish the plunder of a village, or a monarch's ransom, upon a dish of *beccaficos* !

From conquered countries, too, they brought back the booty of new ideas. From Moscow, the Charlotte Russe ; from Italy, the *poulet à la Marengo*. What have they brought back from Algiers ? — a taste for raw dates, or a recipe for stewing locusts !—Alas ! all that the *cartes* of the Parisian *restaurants* have gained of late years, has been what they write down at the Café de Paris, “*breed sauce*,” “*soup of mutton*,” and “*misies paës*,” (which, being interpreted, means mince pies,) an article of food which Cromwell, the greatest lawgiver

since Mahomet or Moses, interdicted for the health-sake of his loving people, just as those enlightened dictators prohibited the flesh of swine.

For my part, had it been my fate to become top-sawyer of any possible community, (and kings and princes turn up so oddly in these vicissitudinous times, that one is never sure of not waking some morning Tribune of the Argentine Republic or Cacique of Poyais,—just as a certain Belgian student used to say, on leaving the key of his lodgings every day with his porter, “*Si l'on m'envoie offrir la couronne de la Belgique pendant mon absence, vous direz que j'y serai dans une heure !*”)—had it been my fate, as I observed before this very long, though apposite parenthesis, to become a governor of the people, I should have issued *my* ukases on the principle upon which the gentleman won his wager of making a donkey ascend the steep staircase of an eight-story house in Edinburgh town, *i. e.*, by pulling it back stoutly.

by the tail, every time it reached a flat ; on which signal, with a becoming sense of its duties, the jackass pushed forwards !—

Apropos !—does any one present know the story of Parmentier and his potatoes ? (a case still more in point.) No ?—So much the better !

Parmentier, gentle readers, as his tomb in Père la Chaise will duly inform you, was a great chemist and greater philanthropist,—the first to introduce that admirable esculent, the potatoe, into *la belle France*. Unluckily *la belle France* was destitute of the true hermit-like appetite. As regarded the earth-apple, it had heard, perhaps, the story of Queen Elizabeth's loving subjects, who choked themselves with the seed, instead of applying to the root of the matter ; or, more likely still, entertained a secret contempt for murphies, as the food of the shoeless and shirtless population of the green island, or island green enough to run its head into an English halter.

The cause of their antipathy is immaterial.

The result was, that though they consented to starch their lawns and cambrics with Monsieur Parmentier's chemical products, not a potato would they place in the mouths of any living thing within their gates, save the quadrupeds to which we have recently alluded as proscribed by the Mosaic and Mahommedan dispensations. If they throw physic to the dogs, they threw their potatoes, *like* physic, to their pigs !—

The worthy soul of Parmentier was in despair. The word famine was just then more familiar in the ears of both French and English than it has been of late years ; as may be gathered from the historical anecdote of Marie Antoinette, who on hearing that the people had no bread, inquired why they did not eat pie-crust ; —a speech exceedingly mal-interpreted by the English, unaware that French *pâtés* are baked in a species of coarse dough not intended to be eaten,—like the paste which, in families that respect themselves, protects on the spit a haunch of venison or saddle of mutton.

Parmentier, too Catholic in his spirit to restrain his sympathies to haunches of venison, saddles of mutton, or *pâtés de gibier*, was not to be deterred from the duty of securing half-a-dozen millions of people from the chance of starvation. He saw the lawgivers of the nation compel them to swallow, for their own benefit, the *corvée*,—the *gabelle*,—the *guillotine*,—and was determined, for his own part, to make them swallow the potato !—

With the aid of the Directory, accordingly, he obtained permission to plant half-a-dozen acres with it, in the Plaine de Sablons, close to Paris ; and have the plantation watched night and day, by soldiers with fixed bayonets, ordered to put to death any feloniously-minded citizen, presuming to lay a finger on that precious growth ! To steal a potato was hanging matter. The consequence was, that within a year nothing but potatoes would go down. The silk attire interdicted by sumptuary laws, became doubly endeared to the belles of old

England ; and the food guarded by the artillery of government from the participation of the populace, was of course regarded as manna from Heaven. Old Parmentier died happy in having potatofied France ; and I have perpetrated a long story, in attestation of the wisdom of my system of codification.

Mais il ne s'agit pas de pommes de terre !—
Neither potatoes, nor the heads or tails of donkeys, are just now the order of the day.

I have something more important to communicate to my readers.

CHAPTER VI.

Memini etiam quæ nolo : oblivisci quæ volo !

Cic.

Il y a des voix qui ne mentent pas. Les âmes sont à jour dans les grandes occasions, et le doute tombe quand elles se montrent.

MICHEL RAYMOND.

Nothing can be awkwarder than the first evening spent together by the different members of a family united after long absence, who feel it necessary to disguise from each other, in polite hypocrisy, the extreme relief they have experienced in living apart. Both Lord Ormington, my mother, and my Self, had enjoyed ourselves fifty times as much as if we had been

dwelling together in domestic infelicity, in Hanover Square. But it would not do to say so. Instead, therefore, of amusing each other with the mutual recountal of our adventures, we sat stupid, and said nothing. Had it not been for Miss Richardson, who possessed the true toady capacity for running-pattern conversation, that forms so admirable an arpeggio accompaniment to the solos, the *séance* must have been as silent as those of the Abbé Sicard.

Luckily, Lady Ormington had a little grievance or two to complain of. I have already mentioned that Lady Harriet Vandeleur was only a few years her junior. Judge of the indignation of my poor mother on finding the gay widow accepted in Paris as a beauty,—almost as a girl,—while *she* was consigned to dowagerhood! — It was vain to represent to Lady Ormington that the special plea which obtained this verdict in her little ladyship's fa-

vour, was her jointure ; that in France, so long as a woman is on her preferment she is sure of being preferred. My mother returned to the charge with “ Yes, I know they all wanted to marry her—that is, marry her fortune.—Still, I must say, I think it most extraordinary for a woman of one or two-and-forty to be surrounded with partners in every ball-room ; and a woman of four or five-and-forty to be as invariably surrounded with *chaperons*.”

“ You must have noticed, however,” said I, “ how rapidly Lady Harriet’s little group of suitors diminished, when some good-natured English friend revealed the fatal fact that she has only a life-interest in her fortune, and forfeits part of that by a second marriage. Admiral de la This, immediately asked for a ship and sailed for the Mediterranean. General de la That, repaired to his command in the south, six weeks previous to the expiration of his leave of absence ; and divers peers of

France retreated to their holes of hotels, like poisoned rats, to die and poison others in their turn.”—

Lord Ormington seemed vexed that, instead of these pribbles and prabbles touching our own country people, we had not brought home a word or two of authentic intelligence concerning the political position of France. Living as my mother had done at the Château, and seeing with its eyes, *she* of course did not hesitate to assure him that the nation was Bourbon to its heart's core; that the *drapeau blanc* was as dear to its affections as the white table-cloth it so closely resembled; and that were Napoleon to land again in France, he would be torn to pieces by the populace.

She spoke more prophetically, poor woman, than she knew of. At that very moment, he *had* landed, and they *were* tearing him to pieces —*i. e.* with the warmth and loyalty of their af-

fection. The arms of Talleyrand were already round his neck ; and the authorities of the Capital at his feet !—

All that his lordship had to offer in return for her accurate political intelligence, was the information that Danby's "Life and Times of Bolingbroke" was pronounced by the "Quarterly Review" as good as if written by Bolingbroke himself ; and those who were fawned upon by the "Quarterly Review" of those days,—the Q. R. of Gifford, whose sarcasms were arsenic, and whose praise nepenthe,—were deified by the multitude, just as of old some slave, whose hand was licked by a lion of the arena, to whom he had been flung as a victim.

"I must say," observed Lady Ormington, "I think it a vulgar thing of Danby to write a book.—What good can it do *him*?—A man writes for money or distinction.—*What* can be Danby's object?—He don't want to be made

a Baronet ; he don't want to increase his income. Where can be the *use* of writing ?”

Where can be the *use* to the aloe of its flower,—to the mine of its gold,—would be just as reasonable an argument. But Lady Ormington saw, heard, and felt with the eyes, ears, and understanding of the least intellectual coterie in the world ; and did not perceive that the human mind must bring forth fruits after its kind, in due season.

I was amused, meanwhile, to perceive how well Lord Ormington was beginning to bear with me. He had long given up the foolish demonstrations of enmity whereby he had caused me to regard my elder brother as the elder son of Adam regarded his younger. And so, to do her justice, had Lady Ormington, who was almost as courteous to Danby, as her lord to me. This arose, however, on *her* part, from a considerable modification of her partiality towards the boy of the cockade ; while

the pride of her lord in his future representation, remained unabated. He was as passionately attached to Danby and his offspring, as I to that lonely grave at Cintra !

The feeling of grand-paternity is, I sincerely believe, (next to the love of a young child for its mother,) the most instinctive of all human affections. It is, in fact, the earliest indication of the simplicity of second childhood. One of the most difficult points to determine in the course of our mortal career, is the exact commencement of the decadence of our faculties. Decay of body speaks in a language no one can misunderstand. The cane, the crutch, the spectacle case, the wig, the set of minerals, are too peremptory in their parts of speech to admit of our turning a deaf ear to their warning voice. But with respect to the decline of our faculties, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us : and we go twaddling on,—from the woolsack,—the pulpit,—the bench,—the bar,—without in the slight-

est degree suspecting that we are seen to drivel.

Even I, though perfectly aware that at the Clubs I am called "old Danby," and that Crockford's begin to consider "Cis" too familiar an abbreviation for one who no longer masticates with his own grinders, am, nevertheless, very much puzzled to know whether, in these my memoirs, I am beginning to potter, or whether my gentle readers are exclaiming, "poor old soul! how he repeats himself."—If I had a grandchild, I should know that it was my *cue* to be in my dotage. I should find myself repeating the witticisms of little Harry or little Jane, instead of reverting to Lord Votefilch, or *la femme incomprise*!—

Independent of the use of grand-paternity as a moral lesson, there is something peculiarly endearing in a little creature who wears our image and superscription, without entailing upon us those duties of reprehension and flagellation, which render the office of papa and mamma-

ship anything but a sinecure. Grandchildren are the shadows, or the foreshowing of the shadows, we cast before us into future centuries ;—our link to posterity,—our investment in the future, — a bark of Columbus, which we have launched for a voyage of discovery upon the Atlantic ocean of Time.—

I suspect that, independent of the favour which Lord Ormington could not but accord to a little fellow so handsome and promising as my nephew, he regarded him as a sort of page bestowed by Providence for the duty of upholding his peer's robes in the eyes of a succeeding generation ;—a telescope through which he pretended to contemplate Ormington Hall in the twentieth century, — a speaking trumpet, whereby he trusted to announce his own consequence to the Britons of the days of Victoria II.—It was not incumbent upon *him* to scold the boy when he broke a Dresden tea-cup, as he had been forced to do poor squinting John, to satisfy the antipathies of

my mother. He could allow the little fellow to be as wilful as other fine children of three years old, and not feel himself accountable for Arthur's sins to Solomon, Dr. Watts, or Hannah More.—On any symptoms of nursery rebellion, he might allow himself to say, like Herries, on being told of a corn-riot at Hull or Truro,—“That is the affair of the Home department.”—

It would have been difficult not to spoil that boy ;

For from the birth of Cain, the first male child,
To him that did but yesterday suspire,
There was not such a gracious creature born !

His deep, loving, blue eyes, — his clustering curls,—his graceful symmetry,—had attracted the notice of more than one artist of eminence ; and I find myself spared the necessity of enlarging upon his graces, by the descriptive words of one of the most pure and natural of our modern poets.

That little one, that gentle one, that simple child of three,
I'll not declare how bright and fair his little features be,
Or how silver sweet his infant tones as he prattles on my
knee.

His little heart's a fountain pure of kind and tender feeling,
And his ev'ry look's a gleam of light, rich depths of love
revealing.

When he walks forth, the country folk, who pass him in the
street,

Will shout for joy and bless the boy, he looks so mild and
sweet.

A playfellow is he to all, and yet with cheerful tone
He sings his little song of love when he is left alone ;
His presence is like sunshine sent to gladden home and
hearth,

To comfort us in all our griefs and sweeten all our mirth !

On visiting Forest Lodge, where Danby and his wife were spending the Easter holidays, I found that, now Bolingbroke was in print, and the Honourable Member for Rigmorole at leisure, the little fellow was becoming as great a pet with his father as he had long been of his uncle and grandfather. Lady Susan again promised to become a mother. Yet with her, as with the rest of us, Arthur was all in all.

The spring was far advanced ; and that

modest home of my brother's was, in spring-time, a bower of Eden. Of all places where the *gioventù dell'anno* assumes a smiling appearance, none more propitious to its charms than a venerable forest. The transition from the hoar antiquity of those ancient trees, to the tender verdure suddenly enclothing them with shell-like leaflets or snowy blossoms, is like a sudden bursting out of sunshine in some gloomy valley,—a bright and auspicious rejuvenescence,—how exquisitely exemplified among the old oaks and beeches of Windsor Forest.

The wild flower laying
Its fairy gem beside the giant tree,—

the wood-sorrel with its crysophras verdure,
the ophrys, with its balsamic odours,—the wild
hyacinths, glimmering like sapphires in the
brakes

Where the snake casts its bright enamelled skin,
served to variegate the scene, whose gradually
deepening bowers seemed formed of such trans-
parent foliage that the light came down,

scarcely subdued through the —— Reader ! I most humbly ask your pardon,—I feel that I am forgetting myself and you. I promised you, like Plato, to banish poets from my republic. Take therefore for granted, that, eclogues apart, the hoary moss grew as good as new ; and that even the venerable holly-bushes, the least life-like of all the trees of the forest, were looking, as one says to some crusty old bachelor from whom one expects a legacy, as young and fresh as a four year old,—when Danby and I sallied forth for our daily saunter, either on foot or pony, gossiping as we went, — ever of far countries, or far times, — for an uneasy feeling seemed to connect us with the passing hour.

Danby was just the fellow to trouble himself about Polynesian researches, and speculate concerning Utopias founded upon our penal colonies, —to dream of noble cities established at Swan River on the principle of that scapegoat from the gallies and the marshes, Havre de Grace ;

or to foresee a future nation, great as that push-on-keep-moving-people, the Go-a-heads, — rising *like* the Go-a-heads, out of the excrement of the mother country,—Jonah's gourd generated by a dunghill.—

I, on the contrary, had my pretty little anecdotes to relate of the frivolities of the Tuileries; which saw in the great kingdom it was recalled to govern, only a country which grew its own truffles, and bottled its own Clos de Vougeot; or of the vexation of the nation which had betrayed an Emperor in the hope of establishing a republic, only to crown a King!—

Danby philosophized in good set terms upon these data. I forget what he said about it; one always forgets things that are said in good set terms. The wisdom that is let fall, is always surest to be picked up; as the gorgeous Buckingham at the court of Anne of Austria, gained more credit by the jewels he wore ill set, that they might be scat-

tered to attract notice, than by the finer brilliants ostentatiously displayed in his cap. I remember thinking, whenever Danby was conversing with me, that it was a pity so much good prose should be wasted. His well-turned periods would have filled a capital page in his *History of the Life and Times of Bolingbroke*,—neither out of date nor out of place.—For the natural history of kings and countries is the same in all ages, like the natural history of fleas or lions,—garden bugs or buffaloes.—

I scarcely know whether Danby derived most satisfaction from his success in public, or in domestic life. The two feelings were so consolidated in his heart,—the popular author of the *Quarterly* and the happy husband and father of *Forest Lodge*, were so inextricably Siamese Twinified into homogeneity, —than an injury sustained by either had been death to the sensibilities of the other.

Scarcely possible for a man to enjoy a happier frame of existence than Danby's; not only

solaced by "the concealed comforts of a man locked up in woman's love," or the self-sufficient triumph of floating double, like "the swan on still St. Mary's lake," upon the placid stream of life ; but because tranquil in body and mind, with the mighty repose of the Farnesian Hercules, secure in his tranquil strength, because holding in his hand the golden fruit of the tree of knowledge. A very great mind is seldom restless. It is into the depths of still water that the divers plunge fearlessly, certain of bringing up pearls such as Cleopatra might have matched with her "pendants worth a province;" while the roaring ocean throws up only tatters of weed, or fragments of wreck.

My eyes were still dazzled with the gorgeousness of the Parisian ball-rooms, when I took refuge in his calm, holy, philosophical retreat "on the skirts of the forest;" with the sensation of relief one finds in a soft grey, mild, autumnal day, after the scorching radiance of summer. The spring was not so forward but

that we were glad to gather round the fire of an evening, after Arthur had held up his pomegranate-bud of a mouth to be kissed, before he was marched off to bed. The lounging-chairs were drawn round. Danby's great white dogs (resembling those we see in the frescoes of Paul Veronese,) instead of stretching their lazy length on the hearth-rug, used to plant themselves among us, gazing upon the glowing logs, as if listening through their canine reverie to my brother's reasoning upon the last new topic of the half-cut périodical or half-digested evening paper. There we used to sit and gossip. It was impossible to feel envious of the superiority of such a mind, which, like the sun, shone only to cheer and fertilize. I saw, without humiliation, that I, who had roamed the world, and beheld man in his various patterns and mouldings, — who had visited the galleries of art and majestic institutions of foreign countries, knew less of what I had seen, than Danby, upon hearsay, or read-

say. While apparently bounded by the narrowness of his monotonous domesticity, *his* intellectual horizon was illimitable ; while I, carrying with me wherever I wandered, the littleness of my own soul, had scarcely elbow-room for thought, so bounded was the compass of my views.

There is something, to be sure, in the consciousness of stability. It is only when the vessel is lying at anchor, that her appointments are smartened up and rendered ship-shape. Danby was not only at anchor, but in a harbour fair as those of Naples, or the Golden Horn ; and the flowers had no choice but to expand in the sunshine, where not an angry breath had leave to blow. I, on the contrary, was a scatterling on the mountain side, blown about by the tempests,—snowed upon,—rained upon ; —like one of those floating webs of gossamer one sees upon the evening air, as if evermore in search of the setting sun, I lived in a state of vague expectation of being caught by some bush, and

endowed with a local habitation. I trusted to Destiny, — the blind goddess compared with whom the blind god is a lynx,—to accomplish something for me worthy my imperceptible deserts.

Like many more people than choose to own it, I have passed through life waiting for some one,—watching for something—I scarcely knew what; like the “letters by the post,”—those “airy creatures” which a man who wants an excuse for staying at a place he ought to leave, is sure to be expecting.—*My* post, alas! has brought me no letters.—Day after day, month after month, year after year, I have still been waiting,—still been watching:—my aimless destiny unaccomplished,—eternity flowing through my hand like the limpid waters of a fountain through the unconscious, unenjoying lips of some marble Triton!—The tuneful Nine again! The curse of Cromwell on them and all their metaphors! I must certainly have been bitten by a mad sonneteer, at one of my friend Lydia

White's cerulean soirées ! But since from the ridiculous to the sublime there is but a step, let us return from my prosaic poetry to the poetical prose of Forest Lodge.

I swear I never felt more joyous than when rising every morning from the breakfast-table presided over by Lady Susan, — cheerful, elegant, fair, kindly, — participating with intimate cordiality in our anticipations of the sport or business of the day, — disdaining nothing that we enjoyed, enjoying nothing that we disdained ! — What an embellishment is such a woman to the wilderness of life ! — Even I, who in the strife and turmoil of the world's vices had almost lost the power of distinguishing good from evil, whose conscience was deaf and dumb, impassive amid the fret and seething of human passion as a rock planted in the bed of a river, causing the waves to boil and eddy but remaining scornfully immovable, — even *I* was deeply touched by the holy and hallowing influence of this gentlest of wives and mothers ! —

There was an old cedar-tree on the lawn at Forest Lodge, under whose drooping branches I have seen her sit on sunny afternoons, with her youngest child sleeping on her knee ;—the babe, the mother, the massive shadows of the venerable tree, all so still and motionless, that it required no great stretch of imagination to fancy oneself looking at the *Riposo* in Egypt, painted by some great master. All the truth of Parmigiano, all the grace of Correggio, were concentrated in the little group !—

Why is it I dwell thus loiteringly upon the picture of their domestic happiness?—or why did I enter so fervently into the refined simplicity of their existence, that not even the enthusiasm with which it was pointed out to my admiration by Lord Ormington, sufficed to disgust me with them and theirs?—One evening, after I had spent half-a-dozen happy days among them, and was beginning to be as much at home as the sturdy hounds maintaining their chartered place within our circle ; the boy was

come to toy away among us those last few minutes before bed-time, so endeared to all children by the inherent frailty of human nature, rebellion against the constituted authority of the nurse, and ambition of conquering a few moments more of interdicted enjoyment. There he was,—little joyous fellow,—passed lovingly from knee to knee,—questioned by each of us in succession, with the view of eliciting the treasures of a spirit bright as the souls of children, whereupon still lingers the effulgence of the eternal Dayspring from whence they have so lately emanated.

His father's hand lingered among the clustering curls of that little head, as if striving to develope in the happy face he drew down towards him as the boy clambered upon his bosom, still unnoted indications of the faculties brightening its fairness. Lady Susan kept calling to her husband to be careful of Arthur's footing, as the father and child sported thus lovingly with each other. Lord Orming-

ton said nothing ; but sat watching them, proud of the beauty of the boy,—the distinctions of the man ;—and prouder of both that they were so closely and manifestly his own.

“ And so, sir,” said Danby, with his eyes fixed on the boy, as though to devour every movement and gesture of his graceful nature ; “ and so, sir, you have been in the boat to-day with uncle Cecil ? ”—

“ Ay, but naughty uncle Cecil wouldn’t find Arthur the nest ! ”—said the child, hiding his little curly head in his father’s bosom. “ Uncle Cecil promised Arthur to go and find a nest among the rushes, and then he brought Arthur home again because there was no nest !—Uncle Cecil broke his word.—Papa and mamma never break *their* words.”—

“ Never mind, my boy ; we will try again another time,” said I, turning to explain, in a few words to Lord Ormington, that a day or two before I had found a reed-tit’s nest among the rushes of the reservoir ; but that

not having marked the spot, I had been unable to find it again on my expedition with Arthur. "The sun was gone in," said I, "and I thought it too chilly for him to remain longer on the water, while punting the boat among the reeds."

"I was not cold, though,"—persisted the disappointed child. "You know, you promised me I should see a pretty little nest hung among the reeds, with two green eggs in it, and a little bird flying about to take care of it.—But there was no nest, and no bird, and no eggs.—You broke your word!"—

"You might have caught cold," said I, to soften his little pouting resentments.

"No, no,—I guess all about it.—I heard Coulson tell my nurse the other day, that mamma was very wrong to trust Arthur in the boat with you; and that for his part he shouldn't be surprised if harm came of it.—What did Coulson mean, uncle?—Nurse told Coulson to take care how he said such things, for that I

should come and tell you again.—What did Coulson mean?—He said you always pretended to be glad to see me, but that you would be gladder still to see the last of me.”

All this time, Danby was vainly endeavouring to stop the prattle of the child by his caresses. But like all darlings, Arthur chose to be heard to an end. I know not which of us looked most uncomfortable before that end was attained; my brother, or Lady Susan, or Lord Ormington. For this same officious Mr. Coulson was no other than mine ancient enemy of the pigtail,—Lord Ormington’s own man.

Danby ended where he had better have begun, by carrying off the child in his arms to bed; trying to drown in the noise of a playful altercation about kissing mamma, and grandpapa, and uncle Cecil, the extreme awkwardness of our relative position. I thought he seemed to hesitate as he approached me in my turn, as if doubting my inclination to bestow upon

the little fellow my usual nightly kiss ; whereupon I stretched out my arms to give him a fervent embrace. Danby's eye met mine as I pressed my lips to his soft white forehead ; and I could detect a glance of grateful feeling towards me for not resenting the boy's innocent offence.—How often the sensation of pressing my lips to that round, smooth, warm, glossy brow, recurred afterwards to my recollection !—

When Danby and the boy had quitted the room, Lady Susan following them with some parting charge to be delivered to the nurse about the little girl, a dead silence ensued between Lord Ormington and myself. Those few witless words of Arthur's had sufficed to summon up betwixt us the ghost of old times, —the spectre of our mutual antipathy !— I verily believe that both of us counted the minutes till my brother's return. But when once Danby got into the nursery, so many endearments were bestowed upon him to cajole him

into staying, that one was never sure of seeing him again.

It was not till summoned by the announcement of dinner, that he and Lady Susan made their appearance; and then their manner was so constrained that I plainly saw they had been talking over the best mode of covering the impertinence of the servants and the indiscretion of the little fellow.—I had never felt their kindness oppressive before; for it was disagreeably evident that they were labouring to efface any painful impression that might have been made upon my feelings.

Next morning, matters were worse. Our pursuits had been hitherto so simultaneous, our plans so unstudied, that I felt more at home in Danby's house than in Hanover Square. But now Lady Susan was so earnestly attentive, that I determined to return to town that very afternoon. Lord Ormington was off already; not in consequence of the little *contre-temps* that had occurred at Dropmore, but be-

cause previously engaged to spend the two remaining days of the Easter holidays.

“Stay, at all events, till to-morrow, Cecil,” remonstrated Danby; “for I am obliged to go to Windsor to look at a pair of horses the coachman is plaguing me about, and Susan will be left alone.”

This was only a kind pretext for detaining me four-and-twenty hours longer; but, being as eager to accept the olive branch as he to offer it, I stayed. After luncheon, he mounted his horse and rode off; while I offered my arm to my sister-in-law, for a saunter in the forest, into which there was an entrance through the shrubbery. It was a bright spring day. The air was all astir with life and spirits. All nature seemed in activity. The birds were darting about with straws in their beaks; and I fancied I could see the leaves expanding under the brightness of the sunshine. Lady Susan was an unfailingly agreeable companion. There was no effort in her conversation,

— nothing overstrained in the tone of her mind. She was so simply pious and calmly wise, that one accepted her remarks and comments without challenge. She seemed so serenely penetrated with the truth of what she advanced, that one felt she *must* be in the right.

It is a mighty pleasant thing to saunter with a gentle intelligent woman along the mossy paths of an old forest, on a budding spring day, with a dear child in whose impulses of health and animation you take mutual delight, bounding on before you in search of violets; or with his little hand resting on the sturdy back of a fine old hound, such as Snyders would have turned dogstealer to paint. I was exceedingly happy. We talked of Danby. She had a thousand traits to relate of the homage tendered to him by the master-spirits of the age; and I listened with pleasure to the peculiar intonation of her voice, as it recorded the praises of her husband.

Her situation did not admit of taking very long walks ; so that we returned home much sooner than suited the restlessness of the boy. Lady Susan was obliged to threaten the wilful fellow with the privation of some promised plaything, (a wheelbarrow, I think, which his father was to order for him at Windsor,) unless he submitted. Before we reached the garden, however, I had compromised the business, not by a threat, but a bribe. I had previously agreed to ride and meet Danby ; and promised the boy to take him before me on my saddle to surprise papa. No sooner had I made the offer than I repented ; for I saw a deep flush suffuse the cheek of my gentle companion. But Arthur's expectations once excited, were not to be repressed ; and Lady Susan gave her consent, partly, I suspect, lest the disagreeable incident of the night before, should seem to influence her decision.

The horse was brought round. Arthur, his little eyes beaming with delight, was lifted up

to me, after I had taken my seat, and, though I saw that his mother, who stood at the hall door to see us off, looked anxious and nervous, the exultation of the spirited little fellow, whose voice was ringing and eyes glittering with gladness, communicated itself to me ; and I set off as joyously along the Windsor road as though it were my own first ride, and not my little nephew's.

“ Papa, papa !—what *will* papa say ?—How we shall surprise dear papa !”—was all that Arthur could utter, while enjoying the novel sensation of seeing the hedges fly past, as we speeded along at a gentle trot.

“ You see, Uncle Cecil, they *could* trust you to take care of me !—” said Arthur, just as we reached Sandpit Gate.—“ Coulson was a foolish old man,—wasn't he ?”

I had expected, according to Danby's arrangements, that we should meet him before we proceeded so far ; and now proposed to return. But the boy would not hear of it.

“Let us wait here, uncle Cecil,—pray, *pray* let us wait here!—Papa will not be long.—Papa never breaks his promises!”—cried Arthur.

We waited accordingly. Five minutes elapsed, but no signs of Danby: I began to get fidgety, and so did the mare. But the boy begged earnestly; and there was something so endearingly earnest in the clasp of his little hand, that I could not find it in my heart to say “no.”

“What, won’t you stay another minute if Arthur loves you very — *very* — much?” — was uttered in a tone of infantine cajolery there was no resisting. It was the plea of a child conscious of his hold upon the affections of many.

As the afternoon, though bright with April sunshine, was growing chilly, I would not loiter longer at the gate, but proceeded at once into the park. When lo! as if the demons themselves had ordered it, scarcely had I reached

the first clump of beech-trees overshadowing the road, when an orderly of the Blues, either on important duty, or run away with by his charger, passed us at full gallop towards the lodge.

The mare, irritated by long detention at the gate, fretted by its unusual burthen, or frightened at the clang of military accoutrements, became suddenly restive ! I was totally unprepared for the first plunge, and the child was nearly thrown from the saddle. Clutching his dress tightly in one hand, I strove to restore his balance and retain my own. But the cries of the little fellow, and the eagerness with which he clung to the mane, served still more to terrify the accursed brute.

Why enter circumstantially into details ?—I have little fear of incriminating myself in the eyes of the reader, by the appearance of carelessness or want of skill.—Any human being who is really human, will readily believe that I did my best, my earnest best, to forestal the catastrophe.

Even after all these years, it is so bitter to

my feelings to revert to the event, that I have difficulty in tracing even this slight description. Unspeakable was the agony of my feelings when, at the lapse of a minute, I felt myself losing hold of the boy, who had already received a dreadful and crushing blow from the horse's head, as it reared and plunged in insane fury.—There seemed only the alternative of having the precious child dashed from my imperfect grasp upon the road, and probably trampled under the horse's feet; or of saving him, by flinging him carefully upon the soft grass.—

I acted according to the suggestion of my poor judgment. The next moment, I congratulated myself on what I had done; for the beast, lightened of its unaccustomed burthen, set off at full speed. I had not had such a race since the business in the Bois de Boulogne; and remembering the sequel of that memorable event, was prepared to find a sudden crash put a

term to my luckless exploit. Two horsemen, whom I passed on the road, made matters worse, by attempting to stop my horse just as I had all but regained command over its mouth. It started off, however, anew; nor was it till five minutes afterwards, that I found myself, breathless almost as the panting animal, attempting to explain what had happened to Danby, whom I met scarcely a second after the brute had given in.—I found it difficult to make him understand me.—Arthur, little Arthur!—on horseback—thrown—lying on the road?—Impossible!—

Both were in a state of agony beyond the power of language to describe, as we returned towards the spot. No person had passed to afford help. The two horsemen had followed me, and were still in our rear. The child lay where he had fallen. From a distance, we saw the white motionless speck upon the green turf.—He was probably too much terri-

fied to move !—God grant he might be too much terrified to move !—Oh ! moment of agony and terror !

We reached the spot, and still he stirred not.—He lay quietly on his side upon the grass, as he might have laid himself down to sleep.—Nothing unusual in his attitude ;—nothing to inspire further alarm.—Further *alarm* ? Could there,—*could* there—be a greater than the panic which congealed the whole current of my blood, as I watched Danby, more dead than alive, bend over him,—lift him gently from the ground—then, fling himself and the burthen prest to his bosom, wildly together upon the grass !—

A single glance had revealed all to *him* as it now did to *me*.—The little fellow's arms hung down nerveless, as his still warm body was strained to his father's heart. Drops of blood were trickling from his lips.—His eyes were still open,—but fixed and lustreless.—Spare me, kind reader !—He never stirred again !—

What a return home !—What an evening !
—How shall I render justice to the noble conduct of my brother !—No being of a higher sphere could have judged more equitably, or borne himself more patiently, though tortured to an indescribable degree of anguish. I would fain throw a veil over the frenzy of the parents, as over my own. Poor promising infant, —poor murdered boy ! His blood was on my head ; and when, after laying the body on the little couch, I divested myself of the garments dabbled with that innocent blood, I could scarcely have felt more guilty had I been his assassin, instead of a mourner who would willingly have sacrificed life and limb to bring him back to his distracted mother.

An express was instantly despatched to Dropmore. In less than three hours Lord Ormington arrived. We were assembled beside the bed where lay the body of the child ; already white and rigid as marble, a sweet smile overspreading his little features, as though the

angel were grateful for having escaped so early and so unsullied to a more genial sphere. Still there was horror mingled with that touching beauty. On the white pillow where lay that little head, was a purple streak. The fair curls were clotted and stiffened over the forehead, whose warm touch of the preceding night still lingered on my lips; and the distracted nurse who stood by aggravating the despair of poor Danby by her comments, kept pointing out, in cruel detail, the injuries her nursling had sustained,—the agony in which he must have rendered up his blameless soul!—

It was well that they were able to prevent Lady Susan from entering the chamber of death, still strewn with his playthings. Danby had the little cold white hand pressed within his own as he knelt beside the bed, when Lord Ormington entered the room. Never shall I forget the haggardness of his face as he approached us.—Never shall I forget the piteousness of the old man's look as he cast his eyes upon

the smiling countenance of the dead. 'The sobs that burst out of the depths of his heart, sounded as if forced from a breast of iron. He did not affect to repress his feelings. His glance towards myself when I attempted to moderate his grief lest his mournful cries should reach the chamber of Lady Susan, was like the glare of a beast of prey.

I could hear imprecations muttered between his clenched teeth. 'Let me not record the horrible words intermingled with his curses! If he called me murderer,—if he called me—no! I *will* not repeat them!—

— questuque, cruentus,
Atque imploranti similis.

I throw myself on the compassion of the reader.

CHAPTER VII.

Qualis ubi alterno procurrens gurgite pontus
Nunc ruit ad terras, scapulosque superjacet undam
Spumeus, extremamque sinu perfundit arenam :
Nunc rapidus retro, atque æstu revoluta resorbens
Saxa, fugit, littusque vado labente relinquit.

Æneid.

Metaphysics,— mountains,— lakes,—love unextinguishable,—thoughts unutterable,—and the nightmare of my own delinquencies.—

BYRON.

I HAVE no right to inflict upon others more than this slight outline of a family affliction such as falls to the lot of few ;—such as *could* have fallen to the lot of none more capable of sustaining it with heroism, than my brother. He was able to thank Heaven as for an act

of mercy when, the following day, Lady Susan was pronounced to be safe, after giving birth to a dead son.—*Another son!*—

I will advert no further to this piteous epoch of my life. Had it not been for the generous sympathy of my brother and sister, I could not have survived the cruel insinuations of Lord Ormington, or the still more agonizing reproaches of my own mind. I saw the scowl of the ancient domestics of the family directed towards me. I perceived all the jealous hatred of Lord Ormington revive. I, the changeling, was become his heir again; or rather, according to his malignant suspicions, had *made* myself his heir again:—I, the interloper in his family,—the exterminator of its dearest hopes. A tigress, bereft of its young, could not have been more recklessly ferocious than the bereaved grandfather of that lamented boy!

Enough!—Be my sufferings, whether from grief or indignation, surmised by every generous heart. I ceased to be Lord Ormington's

inmate. I could no longer sit with patience at his board. My income was so secured that nothing brought us of necessity into contact. I determined to quit England. Lauding the gods that one portion of the Continent, at least, remained open, though France was once more closed against English intrusion, I hurried from the sound and sight of all familiar things.

I felt that the excitement of military enthusiasm, which on a former occasion had roused my mind from the stupor consequent on deep affliction, might perhaps renew its beneficent influence. The talons of the Eagle of France were matched once more against the paw of the Leopard of England. Great armies were in the field; a great cause was at stake. I flew to Brussels. I fought as a volunteer at Waterloo,—unsuccessfully,—for the object of my soldiership was release from a life of torture. In place of the death I sought, a wound, not even dangerous though involving

a long, tedious, and painful recovery, served only to increase the measure of my sufferings.

My name was mentioned with honour in the despatches ; and even at one's last gasp one is never sorry to see oneself in print. I had often expected to obtain less honourable mention in that Alpha and Omega of public life, —the Gazette.

Indupedita suis fatalibus omnia vinelis.

Fortune seemed determined to make a hero of me.

I may permit myself to observe, by the way, that we Waterloo men had not the least idea, at the time, of the eminence of our heroism. We did not foresee that our valiant deeds were stereotyped for the use of posterity. As regarded myself, my soul was too embittered for even the soothings of vanity. The surgeons who watched over my recovery, noting the feverish variations of my temperament, often went away desponding ; so completely was

their skill neutralized by the workings of my mind. They even fairly apprized me,—so soon as I gained strength enough to be entrusted with the ordering of my own destinies,—that nothing but the absence of all excitement, moral or physical, would perfect my convalescence. They recommended change of air and scene, interdicted my project of rejoining the army in Paris,—and advised me either to return to my natal air, or take up my abode, during the autumn, in some tranquil spot in one of the Rhenish principalities.

The project was a tempting one, even to my then untemptable nature. The Rhine was not the vulgarized and Charing Cross-like thoroughfare it has since become. It was not desecrated by steamboats.—It was not infested by the plague of frogs and flies, the hopping, buzzing English, who have caused the savour of beefsteaks to reek from all its post-houses. There was not so much as a Guide-book to rob one of the pleasant uncertainties

of travel. The wanderer took his chance,—the very chance which renders a wandering life agreeable. If he chose to go and eat a bad dinner at the Golden Lamb, when the Wine Bush was the best inn in the place, no need to revile himself for obstinacy; no need to know better. He could plead ignorance. The good or evil renown of either, had never reached him at his dinner-table at the Alfred.

It is one of the curses of the times I have been fated to survive to, that Europe, Asia, Africa, and America have become itinerarized. From the banks of the Wye to the shores of the Hudson or Bosphorus, we know everything we are to see in foreign parts, as distinctly as if we had viewed the scene in one of Burford's panoramas. Not a dark point in the landscape,—not a suspicious lane,—not an inn of dubious reputation. John Murray,—confound him!—has much to answer for, beside the burning of Byron's journal. He

has not left us one mysterious nook in which to niche a romance ; and, were poor Mrs. Radcliffe to revive, she might as well attempt to conjure up horrors about Islington Hill as about the Appenines,

—the Pyrenean or the river Po.

As to the Rhine, even that hyper-genteel professor of the Belles Lettres, the ineffable Mr. Willis, could not restore it to its reputation, ere overwhelmed with “Lays and Legends,” — “Autumns and Winters,” — “Pilgrims,” and “Panoramas.”—No doubt we shall soon have folding maps of the moon, Mogged or Tegged for the touring season ; that is, provided Sir Francis Head, or Basil Hall, or some other lively traveller choose to undertake the writing it up,—or Heath to select the Lunar Regions to be Cattermoled for his next year’s Annual.

Unprepared for the beauty of the scenery awaiting me, I can scarcely describe the effect

produced on my mind, by the aspect of the blackened and shattered walls of Ehrenbreitstein, — now, alas ! as trim and smooth as Woolwich barracks. I resolved to pass a week or two at Coblenz ; chiefly for the purpose of contemplating its sublimity of desolation, and its gigantic horrors, reflected on the blue serenity of the Rhine. An inexplicable sympathy attracted me towards everything on which the breath of adversity had seemed to blow.

Coblenz was one of those unhappy frontier towns,—half frog, half tadpole,—half French, half German,—which Napoleon had Gallicized, —which the triumph of the Allies had re-Germanized,—the re-appearance of the Emperor re-Frenchified ;—and which was consequently now expiating by the infliction of a Prussian garrison, the sin of having thrown up its hat a second time in honour of the Emperor. As a counterbalance to this misfortune, Coblenz may boast of being one of the favoured cities, (I call it city, for civility's

sake, for, in truth, it has no pretensions beyond those of a substantial town,) to which nature has assigned a prepossessing countenance ;—the features being comely rather than sublime, and, above all, the complexion wholesome.

A confluence of streams is pretty sure to embellish a landscape ; and between the majestic cliffs on one shore, and the spreading pastures and feathery poplars of the other,—betwixt the grandeur of the Rhine and the sweetness of the Moselle, the scenery is most agreeably diversified. We catch a glimpse of the noble and striking scenery of Nassau, to which Coblenz officiates as a sort of park lodge, embowered amid evergreens and flower knots ; while to the opposite shore, the green hills come sloping down, as if to find in the Rhine the natural boundary of the “*plaisant pays de France*.”

As the Prussians then occupied, as victors, the city which now pays its modest taxes to the Black Eagle as its true and lawful sovereign, they had of course possession of the best quar-

ters in the place. I had, however, the luck to find quiet lodgings in a narrow street almost adjoining the Benedictine suburb; and still more fortunately, as a particular hot dogstar was raging, it was on the shady side of the way.

Lieber Gott!—On what trifles are our destinies balanced! Had it been on the sunny side, I should never have had occasion to include the Rhine in these my reminiscences; or have remembered Coblentz chiefly for the cool rush of its waters, the rustle of its poplars, and the pure whiteness of the frosted silver from the mines of the neighbouring Duchy, which it manufactures with such tasteful adroitness.

But as it was a fierce July, and my sitting-room window secure from even a ray of sunshine, I placed as near to it as possible the table whereon were deposited my desk and books, and the easy chair in which I used to enjoy my meerschaum and my reveries, in order to afford myself the utmost advantage of the

fresh air recommended to perfect my recovery. There, my arm in a sling, and my spirits almost equally infirm, I used to sit from morning till evening twilight; studying the German language in the pages of Goëthe and Kotzebue, till I grew as blue and sentimental as a Forget-me-not and began to Kant most abominably.

After having cudgelled my brains so successfully with conjugations and declensions that, without much recourse to the dictionary, I could make out Wilhelm Meister or Werter, I began to notice, in the lucid intervals of my wool-gatherings, that the opposite windows, which were closed all the morning for the same reason that caused mine to be left open, namely the aspect of the house, were adorned with flowers, the fragrance of which was distinctly perceptible from my chamber; mignonette, heliotrope, verbena, geraniums,—besides various plants less grateful to the smell, but to the eye more beautiful, as well as to the pocket more costly.

There were five windows, the ledges of all which, protected by an old fashioned iron *grillage*, were filled with flowers.

I had every reason to be satisfied with my opposite neighbours; for in addition to the sweetness and beauty of their hanging gardens, there hung in one of the windows a piping bulfinch, whose performance of one of Mozart's prettiest waltzes was a constant source of amusement.

After enjoying the sweetness of its song and the heliotropes, for a day or two, it suddenly occurred to me, that birds and flowers afford a pretty strong indication of female habitation; and I decided that the handsome solid hotel, straight into whose face I was compelled to look sixteen hours of the twenty-four, must contain at least one charming specimen of the tender sex, evidently addicted to the poetry of nature as developed in bulfinches and rose-bushes.

As soon as I had taken this for granted, I became anxious for the hour when, on the disappearance of the sun, the blinds were thrown

open, and the apartments, whose cooler morning aspect was towards the court-yard, became partially disclosed to view. My dinner-time interfered once or twice, I fancy, with the happiness I ambitioned of discovering by what fair hand the flowers were watered and the bird-cage supplied with fresh groundsel. But after three days' watching, I contrived to jump up from dessert just as the snow-white dress of a retreating figure was apparent, vanishing from the windows. That night, I scarcely slept; so great was my disappointment at having missed a sight of the charming unknown intermingled in my dreams with the fragrance of delicious flowers, and the supernatural music which, to my thinking, is the very realization of fairy song.

If I died of hunger next day, I was determined not to quit the window till I had seen the face of the sweet proprietress of the piping bulfinch!—I was convinced that she must be beautiful,—I *felt* that she must be beautiful;—

and it is a delightful incident, at four-and-twenty, to be the opposite neighbour of a beautiful woman, who waters her own mignonette and blows the chaff from the seed-trough of her own bird-cage. Particularly in Germany. Such situations are made for Germany. I turned over the leaves of nearly the whole edition of Goëthe and Kotzebue, for a quotation germane to the matter, and found more than enough to fill half-a-dozen common-place books.

At length, after several days of irritating anxiety, my wish was accomplished.—And what an accomplishment!—What an ethereal creature,—what a pure and gracious being met my view!—Fair, not as daylight, which is *not* fair;—but fair as moonlight, and like moonlight, serene and touching.—I never saw a skin that so completely justified the old and hacknied comparison of the lily; I never saw eyes that so thoroughly exemplified the equally worn-out simile of blue as heaven. The beautiful vision might be compared rather to one

of Ossian's shadowy heroines, than to mere flesh and blood. She was attired in a floating filmy dress of muslin ; and between its silvery whiteness, the ærial form of the wearer, and the profusion of flaxen hair accompanying that seraphic face, I could have persuaded myself, when she vanished from the window, that I had been gazing on an angel !—I began to think it strange that the people who had offered so many vulgar pretexts as an excuse for the high price of my lodgings, should never have thought of naming the advantage of living opposite to the Herr Bau-Berg-und Weg-Inspector von Schwanenfeldt, and his beauteous Wilhelmina.

My dear reader is by this time sufficiently familiar with me, to know that I am afflicted with no innate propensity for falling in love ; and that I could have waltzed through half-a-dozen seasons at Almack's, or played billiards through an indefinite number of frosts at country houses in the Christmas holidays, without en-

dangering my own peace of mind and heart, whatever I might do those of other people.

But one cannot always resist the force of situation. The propinquities of that snug apartment in the Rue du Montblanc, for instance, and the charm of any lodging opposite to the flower-beds of the wife or daughter of a Prussian Bau-Berg-und Weg-Inspector, afforded a juxtaposition of the most dangerous nature. I own I felt myself in considerable danger of a fit of the sentimentals.

I fancy there must have been infection in the air; for the following day, the flowers were watered a quarter of an hour earlier than usual, and the bulfinch was allowed to perch on her finger and chirruped to, with a degree of innocent tenderness that would have undeveloped Mephistophiles. A sweet girlish smile irradiated the heavenliest of human faces, as she kissed the beak of the happy bird, previous to replacing it in its cage. Bewitching being!

How I thanked the lucky accident which had directed me to pause awhile at Coblenz, previous to repairing to the baths of Ems and Schlangenbad. I even invented a new beatitude in “Blessed are the wounded at Waterloo, for they may sit all the day long in bay windows, adoring their opposite neighbours !—”

It is twice as pleasant to fall in love in summer-time, when earth and air seem also inspired by the tender passion. The birds sing, and the roses blow ; and one does not feel quite so ridiculous when inditing one’s first stanza to the moon.

Blessed moon !—how grateful was I to its auspicious brightness, when, at the close of half-a-dozen anxious days and feverish nights, my eagerness to obtain an unconstrained view of my lovely neighbour was rewarded by an hour’s unintermitting contemplation of her angelic countenance, upturned towards the effulgent lamp of night !—Unconscious that she was watched from behind the curtain of the

opposite window, die Unbegreifliche sat wrapt in her dressing-gown and pensive meditation beside her own. The street was narrow,—the summer night tranquil,—not a breath astir. I fancied I could detect the sighs that heaved her gentle bosom, nay, I could almost have sworn that I saw a tear glitter in her eyes, as she gazed on the unsullied brightness of that glorious orb. But that my right arm was still in a sling, methinks I should have rushed to my writing-table and hazarded a rash declaration of the feelings, generating, like a summer storm, in my overcharged bosom.

But I forbore. Conscience, or prudence, or some other highly commendable scruple, reminded me that there was a ninth commandment ; and that the fair being on whose alabaster forehead the moon was shining so serenely, while the flowers mingled their ambient odours with her breath and mine, was not the daughter but the wife of the worshipful Herr Bau-Berg-und Weg-Inspector von Schwanenfeldt. I ha

no more right to covet that aërial creature, than the man-servant, or maid-servant, or post-wagon horse wherewith the Inspector jolted off, evening after evening, to booze away his hours with the Commandant of the garrison, old General Maximilian Schlachenwachsenhausen, at his head quarters at Thal.

Wilhelmina was only a few years my junior, yet in aspect still a child. Something in the secluded domesticity of the German women seems to secure them from the touch of time. They are invariably the youngest of their years of all the daughters of Eve. There was an almost Scriptural purity in the looks and gestures of the Inspector's wife. I said to myself that night, after the moonlight scene, when I had held my breath and Wilhelmina her peace for two hours by the clock of the Rath Haus,—Heaven send that this singular adventure end not like the fatal passion of the *Junge Werthers*, for his Lottchen. I began to curse myself for the levity with which, only two years before, I had

allowed myself to jest with Byron over the Hoffmannisms and *weinerlichen Romane* recited for us by Schlegel and Madame de Staël. I had laid unhallowed hands upon the ark, and atonement might be demanded of me.

I had taken up my rest at Coblentz for the enjoyment of its smiling landscape, and the contemplation of the desolated fortress frowning upon those tranquil waters. It was for the contemplation of a different object from the shattered wall

Auf des Berges Felsen-stirn erhöht,

that I tarried on. Why should one feel ashamed of remaining in a place, to look upon the face of an exceeding fair woman, any more than to admire Mont Blanc, or Vesuvius, or the Rheingau, or any other surpassing work of nature?—

I hazarded no attempt to present myself to the acquaintance of the lovely Wilhelmina. I was content to breathe the same air with her, to inhale the fragrance of the same flowers, to worship the brightness of the same delicious

planet. My heart was too withered with its sorrows to aspire to a dream of greater happiness.—I had no right to refresh my blighted feelings, blighted by affliction, blighted by remorse, in the dews of a spirit so young, so pure, so heavenly, as that of the gentle one whose happiness was now as innocent as that of our hapless fore-mother in Paradise.

O'Brien, however, anxious to forward my convalescence, in the hope that when recovered I should hasten to Paris, where, though I had divorced myself from the Rue du Montblanc, there was nothing to forbid his banns with the old soldier's daughter, who had promised one day or other to become Madame Timothée O'Brien, *née* La Rue,—seemed to think that as the friendship of a *femme incomprise* had restored me to health on occasion of my smash, that of *die Unbegreifliche* might effect something on the present. With an Irishman's insinivatingness, accordingly, he contrived to pick up an acquaintance with the

people of the Herr Bau-Berg-und Weg-Inspector; and from them, a thousand anecdotes of the virtues of Wilhelmina. By Tim's account, she was an angel!—The moonlight and my beating heart had not deceived me.

I could not but flatter myself, that the peculiar nature of my sympathy had not wholly escaped her notice. She could not but have noticed me transfixed beside the open window, hour after hour, day after day; with my eyes riveted upon her own, as a Persian gazes on the sun, or as Leander may have watched the light emanating from the torch of Sestos' daughter. For she lingered longer and longer with her bird and flowers. I almost fancied tears of sensibility trembling in her large blue eyes, as she bent them towards my window, whenever, in the wantonness of vanity, I delayed to make my appearance simultaneously with her own.

Though I still swore to myself almost on affidavit to respect the virtuous home of the Herr

von Schwanenfeldt, there was nothing to forbid my enjoying the visionary pleasure of lending a soul to that beauteous form,—of supposing all that was passing in that gentle bosom,—of dwelling upon the perfections manifested to me as those of some heavenly visitant to the sons of clay. I might, at least, permit myself to dream of Wilhelmina,—~~Wilhemina~~ *die Geheimniß-bolle*. And dream of her I did, till my sleep was happier than my hours of waking adoration.

One day, as I sat musing beside my window with a volume of Schiller open in my hand, I suddenly descried,—oh, joy!—oh, triumph!—the door of the bird-cage slightly ajar!—I do not mean to reflect upon any one.—Heaven forbid I should insinuate that either O'Brien or Wilhelmina had any share in such an inadvertency. But I say again, that the door of the cage was slightly ajar. If the little flutterer would but take advantage of this negligence to pay me a visit!—On this hint of my ardent imagination, I instantly began to chirrup,

in a tone as nearly similar to that I had heard emitted by Frau von Schwanenfeldt, as was in the power of my manly voice. I saw Master Bully duck his little black poll, and wink his cunning little eyes, as if meditating a flight. I chirruped again ;—he sidled on his perch. I chirruped again ;—he hopped down. I chirruped again ;—he reached the threshold of the cage door. Again !—he lighted on the bough of an hibiscus, — then on the window-ledge. Again !—and, lo ! he flitted across the street, and lighted on my own !—

Magna Dii curant, parva negligunt !

I could scarcely breathe ;—the slightest movement, and the little startled truant might make his way back again, and defeat my projects. Again I chirruped invitingly, though preserving the most rigid, the almost unearthly immobility ; and this time, Bully piped up his waltz, as if to acknowledge the commencement of our visiting acquaintance.

This species of vanity is usually fatal to the perpetrator. It was the Fox and the Crow, in other measures than those of La Fontaine. He was taking so much pains with his song, as not to perceive the Bandana I flung over him, till fairly taken in the toil of its silken folds. I was not bound to know whose bird it was; and, having possessed myself of a Berlin basket that stood by way of ornament on one of the *consoles*, incarcerated the little anonymous runaway, till further notice.

That day, instead of waiting at the window the moment when the gradual retreat of the evening sun enabled the major domo of the Herr Bau-Berg-und Weg-Inspector von Schwanefeldt to open the blinds of his master's state apartments, and the Frau Bau-Berg-und Weg-Inspectorinn to sprinkle her heliotropes and mignonette, I kept quietly in the back-ground; —my ear on the alert to catch the first exclamation of horror, proclaiming her discovery of the departure of her faithless favourite.

Exclamation of horror?—Ah! Wilhelmina! I swear her shriek might have brought down the tottering remnants of the shattered wall of Ehrenbreitstein!—Instead of the faint scream of a tender-souled *Unbegreifliche*, this fragile, this sylph-like being exhibited the impassioned energy of Siddons, when, as Elvira, she struck terror into the brazen soul of Pizarro, impersonated by that man of mettle, Blue Beard Barrymore.—I was paralyzed!—I trembled to think on what I had done.—Bully, in his basket, doubtless trembled too!

Within half-an-hour, came round the *Bathsdiener*, with his bell, announcing to the good burghesses of Coblenz, that *hier Brouthälter* would be given in reward to whosoever should bring to the residence of the Excellent Bau-Berg-und Weg-Inspector von Schwanenfeldt, a bulfinch, answering to the name of “Schatzchen,” and no questions asked.

This did not exactly suit my views. My object *was* to be asked questions. By and by,

came the town printer, with a copy of the Steck-brief that was to come flying all abroad and make the walls of Coblenz eloquent with the loss of "Schatzchen."

I seriously recommend novices in the priggish line to be cautious of entrapping a piping bulfinch. You may leave a watch unwound, so that its ticking betray you not ; a pocket-handkerchief has not a word to say for itself. But the fright I was in, lest that infernal waltz of Bully's should prematurely pipe up, is beyond description. I was afraid of closing the windows, lest so unusual a movement in July might beget suspicion. I was still more apprehensive of closing the basket too hermetically, lest I should stifle suspicion and the bulfinch together ; being desirous that Schatzchen should pipe in the land of the living, at least till the post-wagon carried off the Herr Bau-Berg-und Weg-Inspector to Thal. It was then I purposed to deposit my hidden treasure

once more in the possession of its beloved and loving mistress.

There must be something peculiarly emollient in the atmosphere of Germany. Here was I, Cis Danby, blackened by the smoke of Waterloo, after years of previous defacement by the smoke of London, grown tender as a pheasant poult,—maidenly as a snowdrop,—simple as a cowslip,—and about to make my *début* with a flaxen-haired divinity in white muslin, with a piping bulfinch on my finger!—I would not have had Watier's catch sight of me at that moment, for the rent-roll of Ormington Hall.

That night!—As soon as dusk and the post-wagon arrived, (but the post-wagon arrived first, for a July twilight is as eternal as the youth of the lovely matrons of Teutonia,) I arrayed myself as though I had just stepped out of the pages of one of Auguste la Fontaine's novels, or Kotzebue's comedies,—dis-

hevelled my hair, and inserted my wounded arm into a sling as black as midnight ;—then, after a glance or two at the mirror, and a glance or two at Schatzchen, who was beginning to cower pensively in a corner of his basket, as if grievously in want of hempseed or Wilhelmina, — tottered down stairs leaning on O'Brien's arm, — rang at the bell of the Inspector's mansion, — and requested an audience of the Frau Bau-Berg-und Weg-Inspectorinn Wilhelmina von Schwanenfeldt.

If there exist in this nether sphere the slightest hint of those sympathies which I had recently read of in the pages of Goethe and Wieland, as familiarly as though disembodied spirits were as common as town-criers or Prussian sergeants in the imaginative country wherein I was a sojourner ; if, I say, there exist such spiritual influences in these our times, of a certainty the lights must have burned blue at that moment in the chamber where the worshipful Herr Bau-Berg-und Weg-Inspector von

Schwanenfeldt was engaged in a game of dominos with the redoubtable General Maximilian von Schlachenwachsenhausen, knight of the second class of the Black Eagle.

I never knew what sensibility was till I witnessed the meeting between Wilhelmina and her bulfinch!—Familiarized from my infancy with the passion of Lady Ormington for lap-dogs, I had looked upon such penchants as the bran, or sawdust, or shavings, or any other soft material, filling up the interstices between harder and larger objects commingled in the great packing-case of life. But I had not conjectured the intensity of love that might exist between five feet six of human nature, and a feathered favourite to whom a patch-box would serve for coffin!—Yet I swear the attachment was as mutual as it was marvellous.—I doubt whether an affection half so true ever existed between five feet six of heroine, and six feet nothing of hero. Scarcely had I opened the basket in Wilhelmina's presence, when the

bird roused itself as by enchantment,—shook its plumes,—noddled its jetty crest,—and at the merest accent of her accustomed chirp flew to her finger, trying by a thousand little cries and flutterings to render her sensible of its joy in seeing her again, and its shame at having been decoyed from her protection ! —Kisses, —real kisses, were interchanged between them ; and when, at length, Bully attempted a slight carol of his waltz, tears fell from the large blue eyes of his lovely mistress, like summer rain from the azure skies of June.

I leave it to a reader of even moderate humanity to conceive my sensations when, approaching me in a paroxysm of bewilderment, she seized my hand and pressed it fervently between her own. Wild with the joy of receiving her lost treasure, the Herr Bau-Berg-und Weg-Inspector's wife knew not how to express with sufficient fervency the excess of her gratitude.

What a woman !—what a gem of sensibility !

—What treasures must exist undeveloped in that gentle bosom! *Juch hei!*—If a bulfinch could thus excite the fervour of her emotions, what would be her tenderness, what her truth, what her elegant elevation of soul, when roused by the influence of a sympathetic passion! I would not, I *could* not bring myself to believe that the Herr Bau-Berg-und Weg-Inspector von Schwanenfeldt had touched the chord of her finer sentiments!—He was a hard, square, bony, rectangular man, highly respected by his tribunal and his tobacconist, but making too much use of his nose both to talk through and feed with rappee, to render him a fitting partner in life for a fleecy cloud, inspired by a soul so finely organized as to expand into ecstasies at the song of a bulfinch.—I had, in short, very little doubt of finding a second *femme incomprise*.

After Schatzchen had been reinstated in his cage, with fresh groundsel, sugar, seed, and sand, *à discrétion*, on a much higher system of

philosophy than causes the pedagogue to brandish his birch over a returned truant, it followed of course that as four rix dollars could not be proposed as my recompense, I must be civilly entreated. So as Wilhelmina could offer me nothing else, she offered me a seat.

Her bosom still heaved with emotion, and tears glittered in her large blue eyes, like dew upon a gentian. The moment seemed propitious for the avowal of my long and ardent desire to make the acquaintance of my charming opposite neighbour; and I accordingly commenced a recapitulation of certain phrases indispensable to the occasion, — *Siegartig*-isms which I retained as part of the shibboleth of Madame la Comtesse Anacharsis de la Vrillière, I beg her pardon—of Thérèse! —I flatter myself that my enunciation was *perlé* as that of Mademoiselle Mars, and my delivery such as Fleury or the Chaussée d'Antin might have approved; but I was careful not to mount

at once too high into the clouds, remembering that “*Chi troppo s’ assotiglia si scavezza.*”

Never shall I forget my disappointment at the blank look of wonder accompanying Madame von Schwanenfeldt’s avowal of comprehending neither my French nor my explanations.

I was beginning to read German indifferently well; but to ask for my breakfast, was the utmost I could accomplish. As to clothing fine sentiments in appropriate language, I might as well have attempted to dress a wax doll in the wrap-rascal of a Connaught cadger. I had nothing that would fit the occasion. My best German was worthy only to order an omelette for myself or corn for my horse. I should barely have known how to pronounce

Empfahl dachon dein Herz,

or any other bit of tender eloquence.

Wott steh’ mir bei! — What the deuce was to become of me! Was I to find my way to

the affections of Wilhelmina by piping a Waltz, like Schatzchen?—for sighing and looking, sighing and looking, might do very well for Philip's warlike son, under the influence of a bottle and a-half of Cyprus wine; but would scarcely serve the turn of Cecil Danby, dieted on chicken panada.

Though incapable of talking, I was not incompetent to listen; and listen I did, with exquisite delight, to the expressions of exaggerated joy and gratitude poured forth by Wilhelmina, bright and sparkling as the waters of Selters leaping from their rock. She tried to impress upon my mind by the united force of diction and pantomime, her agony at the first discovery of the cage-door being open and the bird departed;—her hopes that it might still return to one who loved it so dearly;—her fears lest it should have fallen into the hands of cold or careless persons;—and all this was uttered so fluently, yet so energetically, with so much aid from sighs and tears, eyes uplifted to

Heaven, and white hands clasped with impassioned fervour, that I felt as if a page of the choicest poetry were unfolded for my delight. My soul was kindled to enthusiasm by the bright rays of inspiration emitted by the countenance of that celestial creature.

At last, came the moment for leave-taking. I had delivered myself of my errand: and was as destitute of means of allusion to heliotropes or moonbeams, as if just landed from the Sandwich islands. All I could do was to heave an enormous sigh; place my right hand emphatically on that portion of the left side supposed to be consecrated to the tender affections,—look as cruelly charming as I could,—and go about my business; all which I executed with proper emphasis and discretion.

I do not think even the drowsiest of Kotzebue's comedies would have secured me a night's rest, that night.—I tossed and turned on my pillow as restlessly as the narrow dimensions of a German bed would admit; and thought myself

greatly to be pitied for rising with as severe a headach the following morning, as if I had swallowed a flask of Kirschwasser at the Herr von Schwanenfeldt's instead of deep draughts of that Elysian nectar, which converts men and women into divinities, just as of old it brought down gods and goddesses from their high Olympus !

Now that I am stricken in years, I can appreciate the ecstasy of a restless night of that description ; a sort of delirious *imbroglio* of flowers, moonlight, perfumes, blue eyes, pearly teeth, lily hands, bulfinches, Goethe, the devil and Dr. Faustus. Now that not even the paradise of Mahomet in perspective would keep open my eyes after my whist and supper at Crockey's, methinks one hour of boyish infatuation were worth whole ages of my present grovelling materialism.

A worse infliction than the headach, however, awaited me on the morrow of that fantastic night. O'Brien made his appearance with

much such a smile as he used to wear as Tim, when undrawing the convolvulus curtains on especial occasions. The boy was father to the man,—the tiger to the valet;—and his eyes were twinkling with inward laughter as he laid a billet of considerable promise on my rumpled pillow. Could not one swear to the letter of a pretty woman by shape and scent, as one does to those which have passed through quarantine?—

Need I say that I tore it open as became the petulance of Cecil Danby!—Perhaps I need not even add, to a public so intelligent as that I am addressing, that not one syllable it contained could I make out!—Written German was more incomprehensible to me than German spoken; and Wilhelmina's billet looked something between one of my Greek exercises and the hieroglyphics of a doctor's prescription. What it prescribed to *me*, I knew no more than William the Conqueror!—

What was to be done?—It was a dreadful exigency! The servant waited for an answer.

To call up my landlord and consult him about the contents of a billet from the Frau-Bau-Berg und Weg-Inspectorinn was out of the question. Promising to send an answer, therefore, I sent for a carriage and made the best of my way to my librarian's; with whom abided an intelligent young Frenchman, to whom I had already had recourse in several dilemmas; and to him, tearing off the signature at the bottom, and with a face blushing celestial rosy red, as mine had seldom blushed since Eton, I exhibited my billet-doux. Like Pharaoh, I requested an interpretation.

"I congratulate you, sir!"—said he, in a tone that left me little doubt of my great good fortune. "Considering the briefness of your sojourn in this city, you have achieved more than many of my countrymen who have resided ten years at Coblentz!"

I trust he did not perceive the self-complacent air with which I ran my eye along my own graceful outline, till it rested on the point of my boot.

“ You are invited,” he continued, “ to dinner to-day, at two o’clock, by one of the most respectable magistrates of the city; the Herr Bau-Berg-und Weg-Inspector von Schwanenfeldt, who resides in—”

“ Yes, yes,—I know !”—cried I, interrupting him. “ I was aware that it was an invitation to dinner; but could not exactly make out the hour.—At two, you say ?”—

“ At two,—the usual dinner-hour in Germany. You will find charming people, sir, in Monsieur de Schwanenfeldt and his wife. The lady is one of the loveliest women in the Rhenish provinces, —*d’une réputation intacte*, though exceedingly admired.”

Again, I might have interrupted him with “ I know, *I* know.” But I preferred asking for the last edition of Jean Paul, by way of pretext for my intrusion; and hurried home to answer the invitation by polite verbal acceptance.

I was about to behold her then!—to behold

her surrounded with the duties and joys of her innocent life ;— not only with the bulfinch and the heliotropes, but with husband and children !—Alas ! alas !—I could scarcely bear to connect the idea of Wilhelmina with the model magistrate of Coblentz !

I did not much better fancy the idea of dining at two o'clock, or rather of going out to dinner at two o'clock. How was I to make myself irresistible in the broiling middle of a July day ?—There was nothing for it, of course, but boots and half dress. I must trust to nature to accomplish her own miracles. Schatzchen would be there to plead for me ; if indeed there needed any other voice with Wilhelmina, than that of her gentle heart.

It required some courage to confront the Herr Bau-Berg-und Weg-Inspector and his Teutonic croaking. But had I surmised that, instead of German, he would accost me in Germanized French, such as would have convulsed any audience of the Boulevart with laughter, if

delivered by Brunet or Potier, I should scarcely have found courage to attempt my self-introduction to the solemn middle-aged gentleman who, with the pedantic solemnity of a retired schoolmaster, thanked me for having “*rab-borté lé bétit why so, te Matame zon ébouze.*”

Wilhelmina was charming, and attired as angels ought to be dressed on gala days: that is, in a clean white muslin dress, with a sash of dark-coloured riband that displayed to admiration the turn of her delicate waist.—No ornaments;—nothing but a single rose, fresh from the garden, which looked as if it had caught among her ringlets, as she made her way through the entangled branches of a shrubbery.—I could have indited quires of hexameters to that happy rose!—

Conceiving that it may be as disagreeable to my reader to peruse, as it was to me to listen, to the “bladidudes” of the Herr Bau-Berg-und Weg-Inspector, I shall briefly state that he was not much more boring and dis-

agreeable,—nor *much* more of a *Schlaf-mutze* — than privileged by matrimonial patent; and that we sat down with a dog-day sun flaming into the room, to a dinner that smelt very much like the quarters of the Royal Irish, when campaigning among the renowned onion fields of Portugal. Our soup consisted of snippings of cabbage served in the water in which they were boiled, with little suet dumplings floating on the top; our fish was a cold pike, with vinegar sauce garnished with rings of onions. To these, washed down by a gargle of Rhenish *ordinaire*, (which, like the famous Nauemburger, served to indicate where vinegar grows wild,) succeeded a dish of exceedingly fat *bouilli*, accompanied, Germanwise, by four sauce-boats, containing pickled cherries, a *purée* of onions, another of *meer-rettig*, and a black nameless compound that looked and smelt marvellously like senna-tea.

My nerves were somewhat shaken on perceiving with what heroic fortitude Wilhelmina

not only divided her fish with her knife, but afterwards, immersing the clumsy blade in the vinegar so as to blacken the surface, plunged it fearlessly into her mouth ! For a moment I was apprehensive that death might ensue. But as *she* survived it, so did I. Of the fat *bouilli* and senna-sauce, she ate with voracity ; and when the third dish was placed on table, consisting of a stew of wild-boar swimming in stewed apricots, and looking like everything that was nastiest in nature, I literally shuddered at the unctuousity of lip with which this ethereal being justified her carnivorous propensities.

Next came an *eierspeise*, which she imbibed with equal satisfaction ; then, an ill-roasted joint of veal, well basted with butter ; and two or three soup-plates of garden-stuff, that looked as if ladled out of a weedy ditch. Then wafers,—then salad,—then leveret, that must have forgotten the date of its own killing ;—then cheese, that must have forgotten the date of its own pressing ;—then fruit, then *zucker*

brod,— then sugar-plums, — then coffee, — then *krisch*; to say nothing of half-a-dozen delicate *hors-d'œuvres*, such as pickled herring, Brunswick sausage, slices of raw ham, caviar, and other creature-comforts of a similar nature.

Gott in Himmel!—to see the idol of one's soul fill the lips that Leonardo would have delighted to paint,—lips like the half-open bud of a Boursault rose,—lips that seemed formed only to emit a murmur of tenderness and joy, —the plaint of Margaret,—the song of Thekla, —to see those lips dilate to receive a vile, circumferential slice of Braunsweiger Bratwürst.—Oh ! Tommy Moore,—oh ! Johannes Secundus,—oh ! Lord Strangford !—oh ! Camoens !—oh, everybody else who has ever versified upon those ruby portals of the Temple of Beauty,—feel for me !—*Es rührt mich der Schlag auf der Stelle !*

The horror of the Arabian husband who beheld his wife Amina steal to the churchyard and indulge in her foul repast of human flesh,

could not have exceeded mine. I should as soon have expected the Venus de Medicis or Belvidere Apollo to sup on cheese and onions, as that ethereal creature. My only consolation was the belief that this sylph, this Undine, this fay, this sprite, might perhaps be trifling with my sensibilities, and trying the force of my attachment by the perpetration of enormities.

We repaired together to the drawing-room; the *persiennes* of which were closed to exclude the afternoon sun, so that I had no pretext for alluding to the flowers.—The flowers, nevertheless, would have been a most agreeable accessory; for the Herr Inspector entered the room with a flavour of second-rate tobacco reeking from his garments, which might have been advantageously dispensed with.

But though my faith in Madame von Schwanenfeldt's divinity was somewhat staggered by a prodigious plate of sauer-kraut, which I saw her devour at dinner as though it were

ambrosia, she looked so lovely, there was such a glance of deprecation in those heavenly eyes, even when eating sauer-kraut, that I began to revile myself for my want of amplitude of soul, that could make no allowance for national customs, or the force of early habit; more particularly when, on Schatzchen's striking up his accustomed song, Madame von Schwanenfeldt turned towards me with a smile of tender intelligence that might have "woke a soul under the ribs of death," or the rock of Ehrenbreitstein.

The Herr Bau-Berg-und Weg-Inspector, a little boozy with wine and tobacco, perceiving that I made no movement to take my leave, proposed that, later in the day, when the sun became less fervid, we should proceed together to a garden of Eden, on the Nassau road, (which after-experience proved to be some abominable tea-gardens, sacred to the Scheibene Schiessen,) and that in the meantime Wilhelmina should favour us with some music.

Music, executed by the object of our affec-

tions, has always struck me as the acme of human felicity,—“the food of love,” as well as its glorious emanation. To listen to some *chef-d’œuvre* of Mozart or Cimarosa, or even some touching romance from the lips of Wilhelmina, would, I felt, transport me above this visible diurnal sphere. In London the Demoiselles de Lihu, and in Paris Thérèse, had attuned my ear to all the elegance of this captivating species of composition,—the *dragée* of the musical feast.

After the much-approved fashion of performers and innkeepers, of asking you what you will please to have, though pre-determined to inflict the pig and pruin sauce which your soul abhorreth, Wilhelmina, on seating herself at the piano, inquired what she should give me? whereupon I ventured to propose, “Non so più cosa son,”—“Voi che sapete,”—“Vedrai carino,” or some other of the accomplishable master-pieces of Mozart. When lo! to my utter horror, *die Unbegreifliche* suddenly burst into a crashing, thundering sonata, of the high-

pressure instrumental school just then, for the curse of pianofortes and society, beginning to bring heaven and earth and the two extremities of the instrument together!—

Wilhelmina's piano was execrable, to an ear accustomed to the full-bodied tones of Broadwood and Kirkman; and she had not skirmished up and down the keys five minutes, before my nerves were demi-semi-quavered and chromaticized into a state of anguish.—I felt as if I had swallowed a glass of vitriol.—

Not so the Herr Bau-Berg-und Weg-Inspector!—Exalted to the seventh heaven by this astounding rattling of keys and chaotic confusion of sharps, flats, and naturals, he saw fit *not* to beat, but to stamp time to the music, till the flooring seemed giving way under the horrible iteration of his blows. The measured tramp of the *commendatore's* ghost in Don Giovanni, is not half so appalling.

I felt myself in considerable danger of committing Inspectoricide. My evil spirit was roused by all this banging:—

Duris ut ilex tonsa bipennibus
Nigræ feraci frondis in Alcido,
Per damna, per cædes, ab ipso,
Ducit opes animumque ferro.

I do not affect to be an amiable man.—I
know myself. As Byron sings,—

I had been ill brought up, and was born bilious ;

and beg my readers to take into consideration that the thermometer was at 84°, my frame undergoing the digestive process of dumpling soup, raw veal, and divers other equally hard matters ;—the room full of buzzing flies, — my head of the fumes of Asmannhausen ; when I admit that I felt fully capable of the manslaughter of the Herr Bau-Berg-und Weg-Inspector who was so hospitably entertaining me. But for Wilhelmina's azure eyes and floating ringlets, methinks I could have found it in my soul to include *her* in the massacre !—

Before the close of the stormy sonata, however, Schwanenfeldt was called away mysteriously to a client ; whereupon, after receiving

my thanks for the extraordinary exertions she had made in my favour, Wilhelmina quitted the piano, evidently satisfied that she had accomplished a miracle.

Having gazed earnestly and circumstantially round the room, to ascertain that the thumper who had kept time for her elaborate performance, had no longer any time at her disposal, she seated herself on a sofa near the window, which I had often seen her occupy, and with smiling serenity took out her work.

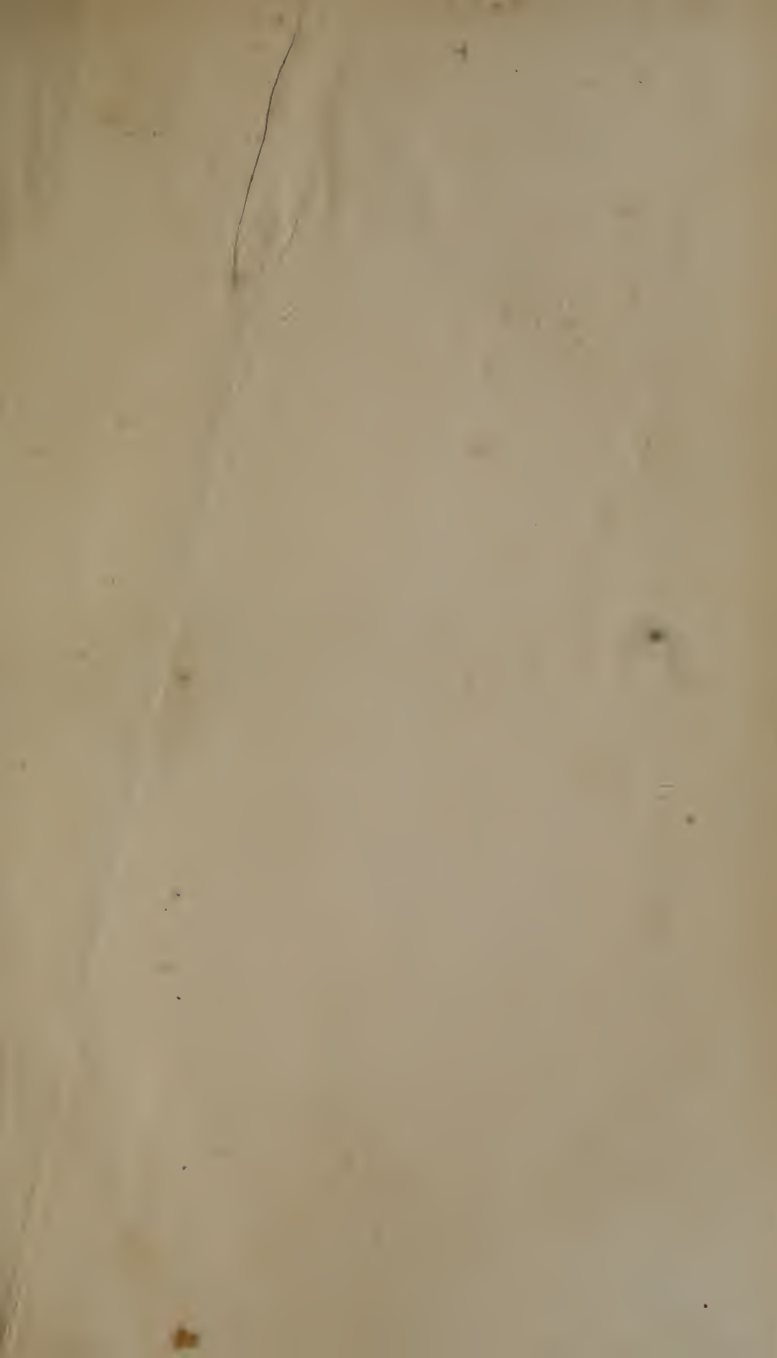
I trust the reader does me the justice to conclude that I assumed a place by her side.

Vos, ô patricius sanguis, quos vivere par est
Occipiti cæco, posticæ occurrere sannæ !—

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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